

Stevenson

THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.
A
POEM.
IN THREE BOOKS.

Ἀρετὴς μὲν ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπου τὰς παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ χάριτας
ἀτιμαζέειν.

EPICT. apud Arrian. II. 23.

by D. Stevenson



L O N D O N,

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The DESIGN.

THERE are certain powers in human nature which seem to hold a middle place between the organs of bodily sense and the faculties of moral perception: They have been call'd by a very general name, THE POWERS OF IMAGINATION. Like the external senses, they relate to matter and motion; and at the same time, give the mind ideas analogous to those of moral approbation and dislike. As they are the inlets of some of the most exquisite pleasures we are acquainted with, men of warm and sensible tempers have sought means to recall the delightful perceptions they afford, independent of the objects which originally produc'd them. This gave rise to the imitative or designing arts; some of which, like painting and sculpture, directly copy the external appearances which were admir'd in nature; others, like music and poetry, bring them back to remembrance by signs universally establish'd and understood.

But these arts, as they grew more correct and deliberate, were naturally led to extend their imitation beyond the peculiar objects of the imaginative powers; especially poetry, which making use of language as the instrument by which it imitates,

mitates, is consequently become an unlimited their eff
 presentative of every species and mode of being quite fo
 Yet as their primary intention was only to en every
 press the objects of imagination, and as they meet w
 abound chiefly in ideas of that class, they of cour ses,
 retain their original character, and all the diff or illu
 rent pleasures they excite, are term'd, in genera above
 PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION. awaker
 fore no

The design of the following poem is to give differ
 view of *these*, in the largest acceptation of the the pas
 term; so that whatever our imagination feels from works
 the agreeable appearances of nature, and all the culars
 various entertainment we meet with either in pay to i
 etry, painting, music, or any of the elegant art introduced
 might be deducible from one or other of those princ the ap
 ples in the constitution of the human mind, which
 are here establish'd and explain'd. After
 ly of

In executing this general plan it was necessary the m
 first of all to distinguish the imagination from our that fi
 other faculties, and then to characterize those or this is
 riginal forms or properties of being about which the an
 it is conversant, and which are by nature adapted b
 to it, as light is to the eyes, or truth to the ungive
 derstanding. These properties Mr. Addison had the g
 reduc'd to the three general classes of greatness, chara
 novelty, and beauty; and into these we may an-becar
 nalyse every object, however complex, which, fiter
 properly speaking, is delightful to the imaginati-posit
 on. But such an object may also include many is it
 other sources of pleasure, and its beauty, or no-mag
 velty or grandeur, will make a stronger impressi-giga
 on by reason of this concurrence. Besides this, milia
 the imitative arts, especially poetry, owe much of ther
 their

ited their effect to a *similar* exhibition of properties
 being quite *foreign* to the imagination; insomuch that
 to en every line of the most applauded poems, we
 hey meet with either ideas drawn from the external
 f cources, or truths discover'd to the understanding,
 e diffor illustrations of contrivance and final causes, or
 enera above all the rest, with circumstances proper to
 awaken and engage the passions. It was there-
 fore necessary to enumerate and exemplify these
 given different species of pleasure; especially that from
 of the passions, which as it is supreme in the noblest
 ls from works of human genius, so being in some parti-
 all the culars not a little surprising, gave an opportuni-
 in to inliven the didactic turn of the poem, by
 t art introducing a piece of machinery to account for
 princ the appearance.

After these parts of the subject which hold chief-
 ly of admiration, or naturally warm and interest
 cessar the mind, a pleasure of a very different nature,
 n out that from ridicule came next to be consider'd. As
 ose o this is the foundation of the comic manner in all
 which the arts, and has been but very imperfectly treat-
 apted by moral writers, it was thought proper to
 e un give it a particular illustration, and to distinguish
 e had the general sources from which the ridicule of
 tness characters is deriv'd. Here too a change of stile
 y an became necessary; such a one as might yet be con-
 which, sistent, if possible, with the general taste of com-
 inati position in the serious parts of the subject: nor
 many is it an easy task to give any tolerable force to i-
 r no mages of this kind, without running either into the
 reffi-gigantic expressions of the mock-heroic, or the fa-
 this, miliar and pointed raillery of profess'd satyr; nei-
 ch of ther of which would have been proper here.

The

The materials of all imitation being thus laid open, nothing now remain'd but to illustrate some particular pleasures which arise either from the relations of different objects one to another, or from the nature of imitation itself. Of the first kind that various and complicated resemblance existing between several parts of the material and immaterial worlds, which is the foundation of metaphors and wit. As it seems in a great measure to depend on the early associations of our ideas, and as this habit of associating is the source of many pleasures and pains in life, and on that account bears a great share in the influence of poetry and the other arts, it is therefore mention'd here and its effects describ'd. Then follows a general account of the production of these elegant arts, and the secondary pleasure, as it is call'd, arising from the resemblance of their imitations to the original appearances of nature. After which, the design is clos'd with some reflections on the general conduct of the powers of imagination, and on the natural and moral usefulness in life.

Concerning the manner or turn of composition which prevails in this piece, little can be said with propriety by the author. He had two models that ancient and simple one of the first *Græcians* poets, as it is refin'd by *Virgil* in the *Georgics* and the familiar epistolary way of *Horace*. The latter has several advantages. It admits of a greater variety of style; it more readily engages the generality of readers, as partaking more of the air of conversation; and especially with the assistance of rhyme, leads to a closer and more concise expression.

pression. Add to this the example of the most perfect of modern poets, who has so happily applied this manner to the noblest parts of philosophy, that the public taste is in a great measure form'd to it alone. Yet, after all, the subject before us tending almost constantly to admiration and enthusiasm, seem'd rather to demand a more open, pathetic and figur'd stile. This too appear'd more natural, as the author's aim was not so much to give formal precepts, or enter into the way of direct argumentation, as by exhibiting the most engaging prospects of nature, to enlarge and harmonize the imagination, and by that means insensibly dispose the minds of men to the same dignity of taste in religion, morals, and civil life. 'Tis on this account that he is so careful to point out the benevolent intention of the author of nature in every principle of the human constitution here insisted on; and also to unite the moral excellencies of life in the same point of view with the mere external objects of good taste; thus recommending them in common to our natural propensity for admiring what is beautiful and lovely. The same views have also led him to introduce some sentiments which may perhaps be look'd upon as not quite direct to the subject; but since they bear an obvious relation to it, the authority of Virgil, the faultless model of didactic poetry, will best support him in this particular. For the sentiments themselves he makes no apology.

ARGU-

ARGUMENT of the FIRST BOOK.

THE subject propos'd; verse 1, to 30. Difficulty of treating it poetically; v. 45. The idea of the divine mind, the origin of every quality pleasing to the imagination; v. 56, to 70. The natural variety of constitution in the mind of men, with its final cause; to v. 96. The idea of a fine imagination, and the state of the mind in the enjoyment of those pleasures which it affords; v. 100, to 132. All the primary pleasures of imagination result from the perception of greatness, or wonderfulness, or beauty in objects; v. 145. The pleasure from greatness, with its final cause; v. 151, to 221. Pleasure from novelty or wonderfulness, with its final cause; v. 222, to 270. Pleasure from beauty, with its final cause; v. 275, to 372. The connection of beauty with truth and good, applied to the conduct of life; v. 384. Invitation to the study of moral philosophy; to v. 428. The different degrees of beauty in different species of objects; v. 448. Colour; shape; natural concretes; vegetables; animals; the mind; v. 445, to 475. The sublime, the fair, the wonderful of the mind; v. 497, to 526. The connection of the imagination and the moral faculty; v. 557. Conclusion.

T H



THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.

Book the FIRST.

WITH what attractive charms this goodly frame
Of nature touches the consenting hearts
Of mortal men; and what the pleasing stores
Which beauteous Imitation thence derives
To deck the poet's, or the painter's toil;
My verse unfolds. Attend, ye gentle Pow'rs
OF MUSICAL DELIGHT! and while I sing
Your gifts, your honours, dance around my strain.
Thou, smiling queen of every tuneful breast,

Lin. 7.] The word MUSICAL is here taken in its original and most extensive import; comprehending as well the pleasures we receive from the beauty or magnificence of natural objects, as those which arise from poetry, painting, music, or any other of the elegant and imaginative arts. In which sense it has been already used in our language by writers of unquestionable authority.

A

In-

Indulgent FANCY! from the fruitful Banks
 Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull
 Fresh flow'rs and dew to sprinkle on the turf
 Where *Shakespeare* lies, be present: and with thee
 Let FICTION come, upon her vagrant wings
 Wasting ten thousand colours thro' the air,
 And, by the glances of her magic eye,
 Combining each in endless, fairy forms,
 Her wild creation. Goddess of the lyre
 Which rules the Accents of the moving sphere,
 Wilt thou, eternal HARMONY! descend,
 And join this festive train? for with thee comes
 The guide, the guardian of their lovely sports,
 Majestic TRUTH; and where TRUTH deigns to
 come,

Her sister LIBERTY will not be far.
 Be present all ye GENII who conduct
 The wand'ring footsteps of the youthful bard,
 New to your springs and shades: who touch his ear
 With finer sounds; who heighten to his eye
 The bloom of nature, and before him turn
 The gayest, happiest attitudes of things.

Of have the laws of each poetic strain
 The critic-verse imploy'd; yet still unsung
 Lay this prime subject, tho' importing most
 A poet's name: for fruitless is th' attempt
 By dull obedience and the curb of rules,

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Book I. of IMAGINATION.

3

For creeping toil to climb the hard ascent
 Of high Parnassus. Nature's kindling breath
 Must fire the chosen genius; nature's hand
 Must point the path, and imp his eagle-wings
 Exulting o'er the painful steep to soar 40
 High as the summit: there to breathe at large
 Ætherial air; with bards and sages old,
 Immortal sons of praise. These flatt'ring scenes
 To this neglected labour court my song;
 Yet not unconscious what a doubtful task 45
 To paint the finest features of the mind,
 And to most subtle and mysterious things
 Give colour, strength and motion. But the love
 Of nature and the muses bids explore,
 Thro' secret paths erewhile untrod by man, 50
 The fair poetic region, to detect
 Untasted springs, to drink inspiring draughts;
 And shade my temples with unfading flow'rs
 Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound recess,
 Where never poet gain'd a wreath before. 55

Yet not unconscious.] Lucret. l. 2. v. 921.

*Nec me animi fallit quam sint obscura, sed acri
 Percussit thyrsos laudis spes magna meum cor,
 Et simul incussit suavem mihi in pectus amorem
 Musarum; quo nunc instinctus mente vigenti
 Avia Pæridum peragro loca, nullius ante
 Trita solo: juvat integros accedere fontibus,
 Atque haurire: juvatque novos discerpere flores;
 Insignem meo capiti petere inde coronam,
 Unde prius nulli velarint tempora Musæ.*

A 2

From

From heav'n my strains begin; from heav'n But n
descends s this g

The flame of genius to the human breast, Of socia

And love and beauty, and poetic joy The act

And Inspiration. Ere the radiant sun he han

Sprung from the east, or 'mid the vault of night Imprint

The moon suspended her serener lamp; decrees

Ere mountains, woods, or streams adorn'd the globe o som

Or wisdom taught the sons of men her lore : the cha

Then liv'd th' eternal ONE : then deep-retir'd the gol

In his unfathom'd essence, view'd at large 68 a wei

The uncreated images of things; of time

The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp, and wi

The mountains, woods and streams, the rolling he led

globe, What h

And wisdom's form cœlestial. From the first Of herb

Of days, on them his love divine he fix'd, 70 Draw f

His admiration : till in time compleat, in baln

What he admir'd and lov'd, his vital smile Were c

Unfolded into being. Hence the breath she wr

Of life informing each organic frame, To the

Hence the green earth, and wild resounding waves The wo

Hence light and shade alternate; warmth and cold The tra

And clear autumnal skies and vernal show'rs, They t

And all the fair variety of things. In ear

The m
Bloom

BOOK I. of IMAGINATION.

heaven But not alike to every mortal eye
 this great scene unveil'd. For since the claims 80
 of social life, to diff'rent labours urge
 the active pow'rs of man; with wise intent
 the hand of nature on peculiar minds
 night imprints a diff'rent byass, and to each
 decrees its province in the common toil. 85
 globe To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,
 e: the changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,
 r'd the golden zones of heav'n: to some she gave
 60 to weigh the moment of eternal things,
 of time, and space, and fate's unbroken chain, 90
 p, and will's quick impulse: others by the hand
 rolling she led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
 What healing virtue swells the tender veins
 Of herbs and flow'rs; or what the beams of morn
 70 Draw forth, distilling from the clifted rind 95
 in balmy tears. But some, to higher hopes
 Were destin'd; some within a finer mould
 she wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame.
 To these the fire omnipotent unfolds
 The world's harmonious volume, there to read 100
 cold The transcript of himself. On every part
 e, They trace the bright impressions of his hand:
 In earth or air, the meadow's purple stores,
 The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form
 Blooming with rosy smiles, they see portray'd 105
 That

That uncreated beauty, which delights
The mind supreme. *They* also feel her charms
Enamour'd, *they* partake th' eternal joy.

As Memnon's marble harp, renown'd of old
By fabling Nilus, to the quivering touch
Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string
Consenting, founded thro' the warbling air
Unbidden strains; ev'n so did nature's hand
To certain species of external things,
Attune the finer organs of the mind:
So the glad impulse of congenial pow'rs,
Or of sweet sound, or fair-proportion'd form,
The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
Thrills thro' imagination's tender frame,
From nerve to nerve: all naked and alive
They catch the spreading rays: till now the soul
At length discloses every tuneful spring,
To that harmonious movement from without,
Responsive. Then the inexpressive strain

As Memnon's marble harp.] The statue of *Memnon*, so famous in antiquity, stood in the temple of *Serapis* at *Thebes*, one of the great cities of old *Egypt*. It was of a very hard iron-like stone, and, according to *Juvenal*, held in its hand a lyre, which being touch'd by the sun-beams, emitted distinct and agreeable sound. *Tacitus* mentions it as one of the principal curiosities which *Germanicus* took notice of on his journey through *Egypt*; and *Strabo* affirms that he, with many others, heard it.

Book I. of IMAGINATION.

7

Diffuses its enchantment : fancy dreams 125

Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,

And vales of bliss : the intellectual pow'r

Bends from his awful throne a wond'ring ear,

And smiles : the passions gently sooth'd away,

Sink to divine repose, and love and joy 130

Alone are waking ; love and joy, serene

As airs that fan the summer. O ! attend,

Whoe'er thou art whom these delights can touch,

Whose candid bosom the refining love

Of nature warms, O ! listen to my song ; 135

And I will guide thee to her fav'rite walks,

And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,

And point her loveliest features to thy view.

Know then, whate'er of nature's pregnant stores,

Whate'er of mimic art's reflected forms 140

With love and admiration thus inflame

The pow'rs of fancy, her delighted sons

To three illustrious orders have referr'd ;

Three sister-graces, whom the painter's hand,

The poet's tongue confesses ; the *sublime*, 145

The *wonderful*, the *fair*. I see them dawn !

I see the radiant visions, where they rise,

More lovely than when Lucifer displays

His beaming forehead thro' the gates of morn,

To lead the train of Phœbus and the spring. 150

Say,

Diff

Say, why was man so eminently rais'd
 Amid the vast creation ; why ordain'd
 Thro' life and death to dart his piercing eye,
 With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame ;
 But that th' Omnipotent might send him forth
 In sight of mortal and immortal pow'rs,
 As on a boundless theatre, to run
 The great career of justice ; to exalt
 His gen'rous aim to all diviner deeds ;
 To shake each partial purpose from his breast ;
 And thro' the mists of passion and of sense,

Say, *why was man, &c.*] In apologizing for the frequent negligence of the sublimest authors of Greece, *Those god-like geniuses*, says Longinus, *were well-assured that nature had not intended man for a low-spirited or ignoble being : but bringing us into life and the midst of this wide universe, as before a multitude assembled at some heroic solemnity that we might be spectators of her magnificence, and candidates high in emulation for the prize of glory ; she has therefore implanted in our souls an inextinguishable love of every thing great and exalted, of every thing which appears divine beyond our comprehension. Whence it comes to pass, that even the whole world is not an object sufficient for the depth and rapidity of human imagination, which often sallies forth beyond the limits of all that surrounds us. Let any man cast his eye through the whole circle of our existence, and consider how especially it is bound in excellent and grand objects, he will soon acknowledge for what enjoyments and pursuits we were destined. Thus by the very propensity of nature we are led to admire, not little springs and shallow rivulets, however clear and delicious, but the Nile, the Rhine, the Danube, and much more than all, the ocean, &c.* De onys. Longin. de Sublim. sect. xxxiv.

Book I. of IMAGINATION. 9

And thro' the tossing tide of chance and pain
To hold his course unfalt'ring, while the voice
Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent
Of nature, calls him to his high reward, 165
Th' applauding smile of heav'n? Else wherefore
burns,

In mortal bosoms, this unquenched hope
That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
And mocks possession? wherefore darts the mind,
With such resistless ardor to embrace 170
Majestic forms? Impatient to be free,
Spurning the gross controul of wilful might;
Proud of the strong contention of her toils;
Proud to be daring? Who but rather turns
To heav'n's broad fire his unconstrained view, 175
Than to the glimm'ring of a waxen flame?
Who that, from Alpine heights, his lab'ring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon to survey
The Nile or Ganges rowl his wasteful tide
Thro' mountains, plains, thro' empires black with
Shade, 180

And continents of sand; will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a scanty rill
That murmurs at his feet? The high-born soul
Disdains to rest her heav'n-aspiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tir'd of earth 185
And this diurnal Scene, she springs aloft
Thro' fields of air; pursues the flying storm;

B

Rides

Rides on the volley'd lightning thro' the heav'ns;
 Or yok'd with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
 Sweeps the long tract of day. Then, high she soars
 The blue profound, and hovering o'er the sun,
 Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
 Of light; beholds his unrelenting sway
 Bend the reluctant Planets to absolve
 The fated rounds of time. Thence far effus'd 195
 She darts her swiftness up the long career
 Of devious comets; thro' its burning signs
 Exulting circles the perennial wheel
 Of nature, and looks back on all the stars,
 Whose blended light, as with a milky zone, 200
 Invests the orient. Now amaz'd she views
 Th' empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold,
 Beyond this concave heav'n, their calm abode;
 And fields of radiance, whose unfading light
 Has travell'd the profound six thousand years, 205

Th' empyreal waste.] Ne se peut-il point qu'il y a un grand espace au-delà de la région des étoiles? Que ce soit le ciel empyrée, ou non, toujours cet espace immense qui environne toute cette région, pourra être rempli de bonheur & de gloire. Il pourra être conçu comme l'océan, où se rendent les fleuves de toutes les créatures bienheureuses, quand elles seront venues à leur perfection dans le système des étoiles. Leibnitz dans la Theodiceë, part. 1. Sect. 19.

Whose unfading light, &c.] It was a notion of the great M. Huygens, that there may be fixed stars at such a distance from our solar system, as that their light shall not have had time to reach us, even from the creation of the world to this day.

Nor

BOOK I. of IMAGINATION.

11

Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.
 Ev'n on the barriers of the world untir'd
 She meditates th' eternal depth below;
 Till, half recoiling, down the headlong steep
 She plunges; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up
 In that immense of being. There her hopes
 Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth
 Of mortal man, the sov'reign Maker said,
 That not in humble or in brief delight,
 Not in the fading echoes of renown, 215
 Pow'r's purple robes, or pleasure's flow'ry lap,
 The Soul should find injoyment: but from these
 Turning disdainful to an equal good,
 Thro' all th' ascent of things enlarge her view,
 Till every bound at length should disappear, 220
 And infinite perfection close the scene.

Call now to mind what high, capacious pow'rs
 Lie folded up in man; how far beyond
 The praise of mortals, may th' eternal growth
 Of nature to perfection half divine, 225
 Expand the blooming soul? What pity then
 Should sloth's unkindly fogs depress to earth
 Her tender blossom; choak the streams of life,
 And blast her spring! Far otherwise design'd
 Almighty wisdom; nature's happy cares 230
 Th' obedient heart far otherwise incline.
 Witness the sprightly joy when aught unknown

B 2

Strikes

Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active pow'r
 To brisker measures: witness the neglect
 Of all familiar prospects, tho' beheld 235
 With transport once; the fond, attentive gaze
 Of young astonishment; the sober zeal

Of

the neglect

Of all familiar prospects, &c.] It is here said, that in consequence of the love of novelty, objects which at first were highly delightful to the mind, lose that effect by repeated attention to them. But the instance of *habit* is oppos'd to this observation; for *there*, objects at first distasteful are in time render'd intirely agreeable by repeated attention.

The difficulty in this case will be remov'd, if we consider, that when objects at first agreeable, lose that influence by frequently recurring, the mind is wholly *passive* and the perception *involuntary*; but habit, on the other hand, generally supposes *choice* and *activity* accompanying it: so that the pleasure arises here not from the object, but from the mind's *conscious* determination of its own activity; and consequently increases in proportion to the frequency of that determination.

It will still be urged perhaps, that a familiarity with disagreeable objects renders them at length acceptable, even when there is no room for the mind to *resolve* or *act* at all. In this case, the appearance must be accounted for, one of these ways.

The pleasure from habit may be merely negative. The object at first gave uneasiness: this uneasiness gradually wears off as the object grows familiar; and the mind finding it at last intirely remov'd, reckons its situation really pleasurable, compared with what it had experienced before.

The dislike conceiv'd of the object at first, might be owing to prejudice or want of attention. Consequently the mind being necessitated to review it often, may at length

BOOK I. of IMAGINATION.

12

Of age, commenting on prodigious things.
 For such the bounteous providence of heav'n,
 In every breast implanting this desire 240
 Of objects new and strange, to urge us on
 With unremitted labour to pursue
 Those sacred stores that wait the ripening soul,
 In truth's exhaustless bosom, What need words
 To paint its pow'r? For this, the daring youth 245
 Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,
 In foreign climes to rove: the pensive sage,
 Heedless of sleep or midnight's harmful damp,

length perceive its own mistake, and be reconcil'd to what it had look'd on with aversion. In which case, a sort of instinctive justice naturally leads it to make amends for the injury, by running towards the other extreme of fondness and attachment.

Or lastly, tho' the object itself should always continue disagreeable, yet circumstances of pleasure or good fortune may occur along with it. Thus an association may arise in the mind, and the object never be remember'd without those pleasing circumstances attending it; by which means the disagreeable impression it at first occasion'd will in time be quite obliterated.

— this desire

Of objects new and strange —] These two ideas are oft confounded; tho' it is evident the meer *novelty* of an object makes it agreeable, even where the mind is not affected with the least degree of *wonder*: whereas *wonder* indeed always implies *novelty*, being never excited by common or well-known appearances. But the pleasure in both cases is explicable from the same final cause, the acquisition of knowledge and enlargement of our views of nature: and on this account it is natural to treat of them together.

Hangs

Hangs o'er the sickly taper; and untir'd
 The virgin follows, with enchanted step, 250
 The mazes of some wild and wond'rous tale,
 From morn to eve; unmindful of her form,
 Unmindful of the happy dress that stole
 The wishes of the youth, when every maid
 With envy pin'd. Hence finally, by night 255
 The village-matron, round the blazing hearth,
 Suspends the infant-audience with her tales,
 Breathing astonishment! of witching rhymes,
 And evil spirits; of the death-bed call
 To him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd 260
 The orphan's portion; of unquiet souls
 Ris'n from the Grave to ease the heavy guilt
 Of deeds in life conceal'd; of shapes that walk
 At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave
 The torch of Hell around the murd'rer's bed. 265
 At every solemn pause the croud recoil
 Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd
 With shiv'ring sighs: till eager for th' event,
 Around the beldame all arrest they hang,
 Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.

But lo! disclos'd in all her smiling pomp,
 Where BEAUTY onward moving claims the verse
 Her charms inspire: the freely-flowing verse
 In thy immortal praise, O form divine,

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BOOK I. of IMAGINATION. 15

Smooths her mellifluent stream. Thee, BEAUTY,
thee

275

The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray
The mossy roofs adore : thou, better sun !
For ever beamest on th' enchanted heart
Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight
Poetic. Brightest progeny of heav'n !

280

How shall I trace thy features ? where select
The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom ?
Haste then, my song, thro' nature's wide expanse,
Haste then, and gather all her comeliest wealth,
Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains,

Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,
To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly
With laughing Autumn to th' Atlantic isles,
And range with him th' Hesperian field, and see,
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,
The branches shoot with gold ; where'er his step
Marks the glad soil, the tender clusters glow
With purple ripeness, and invest each hill
As with the blushes of an evening sky.

Or wilt thou rather stoop thy vagrant plume,

Atlantic isles.] By these islands, which were also called the Fortunate, the ancients are now generally supposed to have meant the Canaries. They were celebrated by the poets for the mildness and fertility of the climate ; for the gardens of the daughters of Hesperus, the brother of Atlas ; and the dragon which constantly watched their golden fruit, till it was slain by the Tyrian Hercules.

Where

Where, gliding thro' his daughter's honour'd shades,
 The smooth Penéus from his glassy flood
 Reflects purpureal Tempe's pleasant scene?
 Fair Tempe! haunt belov'd of sylvan pow'rs,
 Of nymphs and fawns; where in the golden age 300
 They play'd in secret on the shady brink
 With ancient Pan: while round their choral steps
 Young hours and genial gales with constant hand
 Show'r'd blossoms, odours, show'r'd ambrosial
 dews,

And spring's Elysian bloom. Her flow'ry store 305
 To thee nor Tempe shall refuse; nor watch
 Of winged Hydra guard Hesperian fruits
 From thy free spoil. O bear then, unprov'd,
 Thy smiling treasures to the green recess
 Where young Dione stays. With sweetest airs 310
 Intice her forth to lend her angel-form
 For beauty's honour'd image. Hither turn
 Thy graceful footsteps; hither, gentle maid,
 Incline thy polish'd forehead: let thy eyes
 Effuse the mildness of their azure dawn; 315
 And may the fanning breezes waft aside
 Thy radiant locks, dissolving as it bends
 With airy softness from the marble neck
 The cheek fair-blooming, and the rosy lip

*Where gliding thro' his daughter's honour'd shades.] Daphne,
 the daughter of Penéus, transformed into a laurel.*

Where

Where winning smiles and pleasure sweet as love,
 With sanctity and wisdom, temp'ring blend
 Their soft allurements. Then the pleasing force
 Of nature, and her kind parental care,
 Worthier I'd sing: then all th' enamour'd youth,
 With each admiring virgin to my lyre 325
 Should throng attentive, while I point on high
 Where beauty's living image, like the morn
 That wakes in Zephyr's arms the blushing May,
 Moves onward; or as Venus, when she stood
 Effulgent on the pearly car, and smil'd, 330
 Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,
 To see the Tritons tune their vocal shells,
 And each cœrulean sister of the flood
 With fond acclaim attend her o'er the waves,
 To seek th' Idalian bow'r. Ye smiling band 335
 Of youths and virgins, who thro' all the maze
 Of young desire with rival-steps pursue
 This charm of beauty; if the pleasing toil
 Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn
 Your favourable ear, and trust my words. 340
 I do not mean to wake the gloomy form
 Of superstition drest in wisdom's garb,
 To damp your tender hopes; I do not mean
 To bid the jealous thund'rer fire the heav'ns,
 Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth 345
 To fright you from your joys: my cheerful song
 With better omens calls you to the field,

C

Pleas'd

Pleas'd with your gen'rous ardour in the chace,
 And warm as you. Then tell me, for you know,
 Does beauty ever deign to dwell where health 350
 And active use are strangers? Is her charm
 Confess'd in aught, whose most peculiar ends
 Are lame and fruitless? Or did nature mean
 This awful stamp the herald of a lye;
 To hide the shame of discord and disease, 355
 And catch with fair hypocrisy the heart
 Of idle faith? O no! with better cares,
 Th' indulgent mother, conscious how infirm
 Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,
 By this illustrious image, in each kind 360
 Still most illustrious where the object holds
 Its native pow'rs most perfect, she by this
 Illumes the headlong impulse of desire,
 And sanctifies his choice. The generous glebe
 Whose bosom smiles with verdure, the clear tract
 Of streams delicious to the thirsty soul,
 The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to sense,
 And every charm of animated things
 Are only pledges of a state sincere,
 Th' integrity and order of their frame, 370
 When all is well within, and every end
 Accomplish'd. Thus was beauty sent from heav'n
 The lovely ministrers of truth and good

In this dark world: for truth and good are one,
And beauty dwells in them, and they in her, 375

C 2

With

——— Truth and good are one,
And beauty dwells in them, &c.] Do you imagine, says So-
crates to his libertine disciple that what is good is not also
beautiful? have you not observ'd that these appearances always
co-incide? Virtue, for instance, in the same respect as to which
we call it good, is ever acknowledg'd to be beautiful also. In the
characters of men we always † join the two denominations to-
gether. The beauty of human bodies corresponds, in like manner,
with that oeconomy of parts which constitutes them good; and in
all the circumstances which occur in life, the same object is con-
stantly accounted both beautiful and good, inasmuch as it answers
the purposes for which it was design'd. Xenophont. memo-
rab. Socrat. l. 3. c. 8.

This excellent observation has been illustrated and ex-
tended by the noble restorer of ancient philosophy; see
the *Characteristicks*, vol. 2. p. 399. & 422. & vol. 3. p.
181. And his most ingenious disciple has particularly
shewn, that it holds in the general laws of nature, in the
works of art, and the conduct of the sciences. *Inquiry*
into the original of our ideas of beauty and virtue; Treat. 1.
Sect. 8. As to the connection between beauty and truth,
there are two opinions concerning it. Some philosophers
assert an independent and invariable law in nature, in con-
sequence of which all rational beings must alike perceive beau-
ty in some certain proportions, and deformity in the contrary. And
this necessity being supposed the same with that which
commands the assent or dissent of the understanding, it fol-
lows of course that beauty is founded on the universal and
unchangeable law of truth.

But others there are who believe beauty to be merely a re-
lative and arbitrary thing; that indeed it was a benevo-
lent

† This the Athenians did in a peculiar manner by the
words καλοκαγαθοὶ & καλοκαγαθία.

With like participation. Wherefore then,
 O sons of earth! would you dissolve the tie?
 O wherefore, with a rash, imperfect aim,
 Seek you those flow'ry joys with which the hand
 Of lavish fancy paints each flatt'ring scene 380
 Where beauty seems to dwell, nor once inquire
 Where is the sanction of eternal truth,
 Or where the seal of undecitful good,
 To save your search from folly? Wanting these,
 Lo! beauty withers in your void embrace, 385
 And with the glitt'ring of an idiot's toy

lent design in nature to annex so delightful a sensation to those objects which are *best and most perfect in themselves*, that so we might be engaged to the choice of them at once, and without staying to infer their *usefulness* from their structure and effects; but that it is not impossible, in a physical sense, that two beings of equal capacities for *truth*, should perceive, one of them *beauty*, and the other *deformity*, in the same relations. And upon this supposition, by that *truth* which is always connected with *beauty*, nothing more can be meant than the conformity of any object to those proportions upon which, after careful examination, the beauty of that species is found to depend. *Polycletus* for instance, the famous sculptor of *Sicyon*, from an accurate mensuration of the several parts of the most perfect human bodies, deduced a canon or system of proportions, which was the rule of all succeeding artists. Suppose a statue modell'd according to this canon. A man of meer natural taste, upon looking at it, without entring into its proportions, confesses and admires its *beauty*; whereas a professor of the art applies his measures to the head, the neck, or the hand, and, without attending to its beauty, pronounces the workmanship to be *just* and *true*,

Did

BOOK I. of IMAGINATION. 21

Did fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam
 Of youthful hope that shines upon your Hearts,
 Be chill'd or clouded at this awful task
 To learn the lore of undeceitful good, 390
 And truth eternal. Tho' the pois'nous charms
 Of baleful superstition, guide the feet
 Of servile numbers, thro' a dreary way
 To their abode, thro' desarts, thorns and mire;
 And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn 395
 To muse, at last, amid the ghostly gloom
 Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloister'd cells;
 To walk with spectres thro' the midnight shade,
 And to the screaming owl's accursed song
 Attune the dreadful workings of his heart; 400
 Yet be not you dismay'd. A gentler star
 Your lovely search illumines. From the grove
 Where wisdom talk'd with her Athenian sons,
 Could my ambitious hand intwine a wreath
 Of PLATO's olive with the Mantuan bay, 405
 Then should my pow'rful voice at once dispel
 These monkish horrors: then in light divine
 Disclose th' Elysian prospect, where the steps
 Of those whom nature charms, thro' blooming
 walks,
 Thro' fragrant mountains and poetic streams, 410
 Amid the train of sages, heroes, bards,
 Led by their winged Genius and the choir
 Of laurell'd science and harmonious art,

Pro-

Proceed exulting to th' eternal shrine,
 Where truth inthron'd with her coelestial twins 41
 The undivided partners of her sway,
 With good and beauty reigns. O let not us,
 Lull'd by luxurious pleasure's languid strain,
 Or crouching to the frowns of bigot-rage,
 O let not us a moment pause to join 42
 The god-like band. And if the gracious pow'r
 That first awaken'd my untutor'd song,
 Will to my invocation breathe anew
 The tuneful spirit; then thro' all our paths,
 Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre 43
 Be wanting; whether on the rosy mead,
 When summer smiles, to warn the melting heart
 Of luxury's allurements; whether firm
 Against the torrent and the stubborn hill
 To urge bold virtue's unremitted nerve, 44
 And wake the strong divinity of soul
 That conquers chance and fate; or whether struck
 For sounds of triumph, to proclaim her toils
 Upon the lofty summit, round her brow
 To twine the wreath of incorruptive praise; 45
 To trace her hallow'd light thro' future worlds,
 And bless heav'n's image in the heart of man.

Thus with a faithful aim have we presum'd,
 Advent'rous, to delineate nature's form;
 Whether in vast, majestic pomp array'd, 46
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Or drest for pleasing wonder, or serene
415 In beauty's rosy smile. It now remains,
Thro' various being's fair-proportion'd scale
420 To trace the rising lustre of her charms,
From their first twilight, shining forth at length 445
To full meridian splendour. Of degree
425 The least and lowliest, in th' effusive warmth
Of colours mingling with a random blaze,
Doth beauty dwell. Then higher in the line
And variation of determin'd shape, 450
Where truth's eternal measures mark the bound
430 Of circle, cube, or sphere. The third ascent
Unites this varied symmetry of parts
435 With colour's bland allurement; as the pearl
Shines in the concave of its azure bed, 455
And painted shells indent their speckled wreath.
440 Then more attractive rise the blooming forms
Thro' which the breath of nature has infus'd
445 Her genial pow'r to draw with pregnant veins
Nutritious moisture from the bounteous earth, 460
In fruit and seed prolific: thus the flow'rs
450 Their purple honours with the spring resume;
And such the stately tree which autumn bends
455 With blushing treasures. But more lovely still
Is nature's charm, where to the full consent 465
Of complicated members, to the bloom
Of colour, and the vital change of growth,
440 Life's holy flame and piercing sense are giv'n,
Or And

And active motion speaks the temper'd soul :
 So moves the bird of Juno ; so the steed 470
 With rival ardour beats the dusty plain,
 And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy
 Salute their fellows. Thus doth beauty dwell
 There most conspicuous, ev'n in outward shape,
 Where dawns the high expression of a mind : 475
 By steps conducting our inraptur'd search
 To that eternal origin, whose pow'r,
 Thro' all th' unbounded symmetry of things,
 Like rays effulging from the parent sun,
 This endless mixture of her charms diffus'd. 480
 MIND, MIND alone, bear witness, earth and heav'n
 The living fountain in itself contains
 Of beauteous and sublime : here, hand in hand,
 Sit paramount the Graces ; here inthron'd,
 Cœlestial Venus, with divinest airs, 485
 Invites the soul to never-fading joy.
 Look then abroad thro' nature, to the range
 Of planets, suns, and adamantinè spheres
 Wheeling unshaken thro' the void immense ;
 And speak, O man ! does this capacious scene 490
 With half that kindling majesty dilate
 Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose

*As when Brutus rose, &c.] Cicero himself describes this fact
 — Cesare interfecto — statim cruentum alit' extollens M.
 Brutus pugionem, Ciceronem nominatim exclamavit, atque ei re-
 cuperatam libertatem est gratulatus. Cic. Philipp. 2. 12.*

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Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate;
 Amid the croud of patriots; and his arm
 Aloft extending, like eternal Jove 495
 When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
 On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
 And bade the father of his country, hail!
 For lo! the tyrant prostrate on the dust,
 And Rome again is free? — Is aught so fair 500
 In all the dewy landskips of the spring,
 In the bright eye of Hesper or the morn,
 In nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair
 As virtuous friendship? as the candid blush
 Of him who strives with fortune to be just? 505
 The graceful tear that streams for other's woes?
 Or the mild majesty of private life,
 Where peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
 The gate; where honour's liberal hands effuse
 Unenvy'd treasures, and the snowy wings 510
 Of innocence and love protect the scene?
 Once more search, undismay'd, the dark profound
 Where nature works in secret; view the beds
 Of min'ral treasure, and th' eternal vault
 That bounds the hoary ocean; trace the forms 515
 Of atoms moving with incessant change
 Their elemental round; behold the seeds
 Of being, and the energy of life
 Kindling the mass with ever-active flame:
 Then to the secrets of the working mind 520

D

Atten-

Attentive turn, from dim oblivion call
 Her fleet, ideal band; and bid them, go!
 Break thro' time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour
 That saw the heav'ns created: then declare
 If aught were found in those external scenes 525
 To move thy wonder now. For what are all
 The forms which brute, unconscious matter wears,
 Greatness of bulk, or symmetry of parts?
 Not reaching to the heart, soon feeble grows
 The superficial impulse; dull their charms, 530
 And satiate soon, and pall the languid eye.
 Not so the moral species, or the pow'rs
 Of genius and design; th' ambitious mind
 There sees herself: by these congenial forms
 Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenser act 535
 She bends each nerve, and meditates well-pleas'd
 Her features in the mirror. For of all
 Th' inhabitants of earth, to man alone
 Creative wisdom gave to lift his eye
 To truth's eternal measures; thence to frame 540
 The sacred laws of action and of will,
 Discerning justice from unequal deeds,
 And temperance from folly. But beyond
 This energy of truth, whose dictates bind
 Assenting reason, the benignant fire, 545
 To deck the honour'd paths of just and good,
 Has added bright imagination's rays:

Where

BOOK I. OF IMAGINATION.

27

Where virtue, rising from the awful depth
 Of truth's mysterious bosom, doth forsake
 The unadorn'd condition of her birth; 550
 And dress'd by fancy in ten thousand hues,
 Assumes a various feature, to attract,
 With charms responsive to each gazer's eye,
 The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk,
 Th' ingenuous youth whom solitude inspires 555
 With purest wishes from the pensive shade
 Beholds her moving, like a virgin-muse
 That wakes her lyre to some indulgent theme
 Of harmony and wonder : while among
 The herd of servile minds, her strenuous form 560
 Indignant flashes on the patriot's eye,
 And thro' the rolls of memory appeals
 To ancient honour; or in act serene,
 Yet watchful, raises the majestic sword
 Of publick pow'r, from dark ambition's reach 565
 To guard the sacred volume of the laws.

Genius of ancient Greece ! whose faithful steps
 Well-pleas'd I follow thro' the sacred paths

*Where virtue rising from the awful depth
 Of truth's mysterious bosom, &c.] according to the opinion
 of those who assert moral obligation to be founded on an im-
 mutable and universal law, and that pathetic feeling which
 is usually call'd the moral sense, to be determin'd by the
 peculiar temper of the imagination and the earliest associa-
 tions of ideas.*

Of nature and of science; nurse divine
 Of all heroic deeds, and fair desires! 570
 O! let the breath of thy extended praise
 Inspire my kindling bosom to the height
 Of this untempted theme. Nor be my thoughts
 Presumptuous counted, if, amid the calm
 That sooths this vernal evening into smiles, 575
 I steal impatient from the sordid haunts
 Of strife and low ambition, to attend
 Thy sacred presence in the sylvan shade,
 By their malignant footsteps ne'er profan'd.
 Descend, propitious! to my favour'd eye; 580
 Such in thy mien, thy warm, exalted air,
 As when the Persian tyrant, foil'd and stung
 With shame and desperation, gnash'd his teeth
 To see thee rend the pageants of his throne;
 And at the lightning of thy lifted spear 585
 Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils,
 Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,
 Thy smiling band of arts, thy godlike fires
 Of civil wisdom, thy heroic youth
 Warm from the schools of glory. Guide my way 590
 Thro' fair Lycéum's walk, the green retreats
 Of Academus, and the thymy vale,
 Where oft enchanted, with Socratic sounds,

Lycéum.] The school of *Aristotle*.

Academus.] The school of *Plato*.

Ilissus

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Ilissus pure devolv'd his tuneful stream
 In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store 595
 Of these auspicious fields, may I unblam'd
 Transplant some living blossoms to adorn
 My native clime: while far above the flight
 Of fancy's plume aspiring, I unlock
 The springs of ancient wisdom; while I join 600
 Thy name, thrice honour'd! with th' immortal praise
 Of nature; while to my compatriot youth
 I point the high example of thy sons,
 And tune to Attic themes the British lyre.

Ilissus.] One of the rivers on which *Athens* was situated.
Plato, in some of his finest dialogues, lays the scene of the
 conversation with *Socrates* on its banks.

End of the FIRST BOOK.



ARGU-

ARGUMENT of the SECOND BOOK.

THE separation of the works of imagination from philosophy, the cause of their abuse among the moderns; to verse 41. Prospect of their re-union under the influence of publick liberty; to v. 61. Enumeration of accidental Pleasures, which increase the effect of objects delightful to the imagination. The pleasures of Sense; v. 73. Particular circumstances of the mind; v. 84. Discovery of truth; v. 97. Perception of contrivance and design; v. 121. Emotion of the passions; v. 136. All the natural passions partake of a pleasing sensation, with the final cause of this constitution illustrated by an allegorical vision, and exemplified in sorrow, pity, terror and indignation; from v. 145 to the end.



THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.
BOOK the SECOND.

When shall the laurel and the vocal string
Resume their honours? When shall we
behold

The tuneful tongue, the Promothéan hand
Aspire to ancient praise? Alas! how faint,
How slow the dawn of beauty and of truth
Breaks the reluctant shades of Gothic night
Which yet involve the nations! Long they groan'd
Beneath the furies of rapacious force;
Oft as the gloomy north, with iron-swarms
Tempestuous pouring from her frozen caves, to
Blasted th' Italian shore, and swept the works
Of liberty and wisdom down the gulph
Of all-devouring night. As long immur'd

In

In noontide darkness by th' glimm'ring lamp,
 Each muse and each fair science pin'd away 15
 The sordid hours: while foul, barbarian hands
 Their mysteries profan'd, unstrung the lyre,
 And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.
 At last the Muses rose, and spurn'd their bonds,
 And wildly warbling scatter'd, as they flew, 20
 Their blooming wreaths from fair Valclusa's
 bow'rs

To Arno's myrtle border and the shore

At last the Muses rose, &c.] About the age of *Hugh Capet*, the founder of the third race of *French* kings, the poets of *Provence* were in high reputation; a sort of strolling bards or rhapsodists, who went about the courts of princes and noblemen, entertaining them at festivals with music and poetry. They attempted both the epic ode and satire, and abounded in a wild and fantastic vein of fable, partly allegorical, and partly founded on traditional legends of the *Saracen* wars. These were the Rudiments of the *Italian* poetry. But their taste and Composition must have been extremely barbarous, as we may judge by those who followed the turn of their fable in much politer times; such as *Boiardo*, *Bernardo Tasso*, *Ariosto*, &c.

Valclusa.] The famous retreat of *Francesco Petrarcha*, the father of *Italian* poetry, and his mistress *Laura*, a lady of *Avignon*.

Arno.] The river which runs by *Florence*, the birth-place of *Dante* and *Boccaccio*.

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Of soft Parthenope. But still the rage
 Of dire ambition and gigantic pow'r,
 From public aims and from the busy walk 25
 Of civil commerce, drove the bolder train
 Of penetrating science to the cells,
 Where studious ease consumes the silent hour
 In shadowy searches and unfruitful care.
 Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts 30
 Of mimic fancy and harmonious joy,

E

To

Parthenope.] Or *Naples*, the birth-place of *Samazaro*.
 The great *Torquato Tasso* was born at *Sorrento* in the king-
 dom of *Naples*.

— the rage

Of dire ambition, &c.] This relates to the cruel wars
 among the republics of *Italy*, and the abominable politics
 of its little princes, about the fifteenth century. These at
 last, in conjunction with the papal power, intirely ex-
 tinguished the spirit of liberty in that country, and esta-
 blished that abuse of the fine arts which has since been
 propagated over all *Europe*.

Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts, &c.] Nor
 were they only losers by the separation. For philosophy
 itself, to use the words of a noble philosopher, being thus
 sever'd from the sprightly arts and sciences, must consequently
 grow dronish, insipid, pedantic, useless, and directly oppo-
 site to the real knowledge and practice of the world. Infomuch,
 that a gentleman, says another excellent Writer, cannot ea-
 sily bring himself to like so austere and ungainly a form: so
 greatly is it changed from what was once the delight of the
 finest gentlemen of antiquity, and their recreation after the hurry
 of public affairs! From this condition it cannot be reco-
 vered but by uniting it once more with the works of
 imagination; and we have had the pleasure of observing

To priestly domination and the lust
 Of lawless courts, their amiable toil
 For three inglorious ages have resign'd,
 In vain reluctant: and Torquato's tongue 35
 Was tun'd for slavish pæans at the throne
 Of tinsel pomp; and Raphael's magic hand
 Effus'd its fair creation to inchant
 The fond adoring herd in Latian fanes
 To blind belief; while on their prostrate necks 40
 The sable tyrant plants his heel secure.
 But now behold! the radiant æra dawns,
 When freedom's ample fabric, fix'd at length
 For endless years on Albion's happy shore
 In full proportion, once more shall extend 45
 To all the kindred pow'rs of social bliss
 A common mansion, a parental roof.
 There shall the Virtues, there shall Wisdom's train,
 Their long-lost friends rejoining, as of old,

a very great progress made towards their union in *England* within these few years. It is hardly possible to conceive them at a greater distance from each other than at the revolution, when *Locke* stood at the head of one party, and *Dryden* of the other. But the general spirit of liberty, which has ever since been growing, naturally invited our men of wit and genius to improve that influence which the arts of persuasion give them with the people, by applying them to subjects of importance to society. Thus poetry and eloquence became considerable; and philosophy is now of course obliged to borrow of their embellishments, in order even to gain audience with the public.

Im-

BOOK II. of IMAGINATION. 35

Imbrace the smiling family of arts, 50
 The Muses and the Graces. Then no more
 Shall vice, distracting their delicious gifts
 To aims abhorr'd, with high distaste and scorn
 Turn from their charms the Philosophic eye,
 The patriot-bosom: then no more the paths 55
 Of public care or intellectual toil,
 Alone by footsteps haughty and severe
 In gloomy state be trod: th' harmonious Muse
 And her persuasive sisters then shall plant
 Their sheltring laurels o'er the bleak ascent, 60
 And shed their flow'rs along the rugged way.
 Arm'd with the lyre, already have we dar'd
 To pierce divine philosophy's retreats,
 And teach the Muse her lore; already strove
 Their long-divided honours to unite, 65
 While temp'ring this deep argument we sang
 Of truth and beauty. Now the same fair task
 Impends; now urging our ambitious toil,
 We hasten to recount the various springs
 Of adventitious pleasure, which adjoin 70
 Their grateful influence to the prime effect
 Of objects grand or beauteous, and inlarge
 The complicated joy. The sweets of sense,
 Do they not oft with kind accession flow,
 To raise harmonious fancy's native charm? 75
 So while we taste the fragrance of the rose,
 Glows not her blush the fairer? While we view

Amid the noon-tide walk a limpid rill
 Gush thro' the trickling herbage, to the thirst
 Of summer yielding the delicious draught 80
 Of cool refreshment; o'er the mossy brink
 Shines not the surface clearer, and the waves
 With sweeter music murmur as they flow?

Nor this alone; the various lot of life
 Oft from external circumstance assumes 85
 A moment's disposition to rejoice
 In those delights which at a different hour
 Would pass unheeded. Fair the face of spring,
 When rural songs and odours wake the morn,
 To every eye; but how much more to his, 90
 Round whom the bed of sickness long diffus'd
 Its melancholy gloom! how doubly fair,
 When first with fresh-born vigour *he* inhales
 The balmy breeze, and feels the blessed sun
 Warm at his bosom, from the springs of life 95
 Chasing oppressive damps and languid pain!

Or shall I mention, where cœlestial truth
 Her awful light discloses, to effulge
 A more majestic pomp on beauty's frame?
 For man loves knowledge, and the beams of truth
 More welcome touch his understanding's eye,
 Than all the blandishments of sound, his ear,
 Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet

The

BOOK II. of IMAGINATION. 37

The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctur'd hues
 To me have shone so pleasing, as when first 105
 The hand of science pointed out the path
 In which the sun-beams gleaming from the west
 Fall on the wat'ry cloud, whose darksome veil
 Involves the orient; and that trickling show'r
 Piercing thro' every crystalline convex 110
 Of clust'ring dew-drops to their flight oppos'd,
 Recoil at length where concave all behind
 Th' internal surface of each glassy orb
 Repels their forward passage into air;
 That thence direct they seek the radiant goal 115
 From which their course began; and as they strike
 In diff'rent lines the gazer's obvious eye,
 Assume a diff'rent lustre, thro' the brede
 Of colours changing from the splendid rose
 To the pale violet's dejected hue. 120

Or shall we touch that kind access of joy,
 That springs to each fair object, while we trace,
 Thro' all its fabric, wisdom's artful aim
 Disposing every part, and gaining still
 By means proportion'd her benignant end? 125
 Speak, ye, the pure delight, whose favour'd steps
 The lamp of science thro' the jealous maze
 Of nature guides, when haply you reveal
 Her secret honours: whether in the sky,
 The beauteous laws of light, the central pow'rs 130
 That

That wheel the pensile planets round the year;
 Whether in wonders of the rowling deep,
 Or smiling fruits, of pleasure-pregnant earth,
 Or fine-adjusted springs of life and sense,
 You scan the counsels of their author's hand. 135

What, when to raise the meditated scene,
 The flame of passion, thro' the struggling soul
 Deep-kindled, shows across that sudden blaze
 The object of its rapture, vast of size,
 With fiercer colours and a night of shade? 140
 What? like a storm from their capacious bed
 The sounding seas o'erwhelming, when the might
 Of these eruptions, working from the depth
 Of man's strong apprehension, shakes his frame
 Ev'n to the base; from every naked sense 145
 Of pain or pleasure dissipating all
 Opinion's feeble cov'rings, and the veil
 Spun from the cobweb-fashion of the times
 To hide the feeling heart? Then nature speaks
 Her genuine language, and the words of men, 150
 Big with the very motion of their souls,
 Declare with what accumulated force,
 Th' impetuous nerve of passion urges on
 The native weight and energy of things.

Yet more; her honours where nor beauty claims,
 Nor shews of good the thirsty sense allure,

From

BOOK II. of IMAGINATION.

39

From passion's pow'r alone our nature holds
 Essential pleasure. Passion's fierce illapse
 Rouzes the mind's whole fabric; with supplies
 Of daily impulse keeps th' elastic pow'rs 160
 Intensely poiz'd, and polishes anew
 By that collision all the fine machine:
 Else rust would rise, and foulness, by degrees
 Incumbring, choak at last what heav'n design'd
 For ceaseless motion and a round of toil. 165
 —But say, does every passion men endure
 Thus minister delight? That name indeed
 Becomes the rosy breath of love; becomes
 The radiant smiles of joy, th' applauding hand
 Of admiration: but the bitter show'r 170

From passion's pow'r alone, &c.] This very mysterious kind of pleasure which is often found in the exercise of passions generally counted painful, has been taken notice of by several authors. *Lucretius* resolves it into self-love,

Suave mari magno, &c. lib. II. 1.

As if a man was never pleas'd in being mov'd at the distress of a tragedy, without a cool Reflection that tho' these fictitious personages were so unhappy, yet he himself was perfectly at ease and in safety. The ingenious and candid author of the *reflexions critique sur la poesie & sur la peinture*, accounts for it by the general delight which the mind takes in its own activity, and the abhorrence it feels of an indolent and unattentive state: And this, joined with the moral applause of its own temper, which attends these emotions when natural and just, is certainly the true foundation of the pleasure, which as it is the origin and basis of tragedy and epic, deserved a very particular consideration in this poem.

That

That sorrow sheds upon a brother's grave;
 But the dumb palsy of nocturnal fear,
 Or those consuming fires that gnaw the heart
 Of panting indignation, find we there
 To move delight? — Then listen, while my tongue
 Th' unalter'd will of heav'n with faithful awe
 Reveals; what old Harmodius wont to teach
 My early age; Harmodius, who had weigh'd
 Within his learn'd mind whate'er the schools
 Of wisdom, or thy lonely-whisp'ring voice, 186
 O faithful nature! dictate of the laws
 Which govern and support this mighty frame
 Of universal being. Oft the hours
 From morn to eve have stole unmark'd away,
 While mute attention hung upon his lips, 187
 As thus the sage his awful tale began.

'Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,
 When sportless youth with solitude resigns
 To sweet philosophy the studious day,
 What time pale autumn shades the silent eve, 190
 Musing I rov'd. Of good and evil much,
 And much of mortal man my thought revolv'd;
 When starting full on fancy's gushing eye,
 The mournful image of Parthenia's fate,
 That hour, O long belov'd and long deplor'd! 195
 When blooming youth, nor gentlest wisdom's arts,
 Nor Hymen's honours gather'd for thy brow,

Nor

Nor all thy lover's, all thy father's tears
 Avail'd to snatch thee from the cruel grave;
 Thy agonizing looks, thy last farewell 200
 Struck to the inmost feeling of my soul
 As with the hand of death. At once the shade
 More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds
 With hoarser murmur'd shook the branches. Dark
 As midnight storms, the scene of human things, 205
 Appear'd before me; deserts, burning sands
 Where the parch'd adder dies; the frozen south,
 And desolation blasting all the west
 With rapine and with murder: tyrant-pow'r
 Here sits enthron'd in blood; the baleful charms 210
 Of superstition there infect the skies,
 And turn the sun to horror. Gracious heav'n!
 What is the life of man? Or cannot these,
 Not these portents thy awful will suffice?
 That propagated thus beyond their scope, 215
 They rise to act their cruelties anew
 In my afflicted bosom, thus decreed
 The universal sensitive of pain,
 The wretched heir of evils not its own!

Thus I, impatient; when at once effus'd, 220
 A flashing torrent of celestial day
 Burst thro' the shadowy void. With slow descent
 A purple cloud came floating thro' the sky,
 And pois'd at length within the circling trees,

F

Hung

Hung obvious to my view : till opening wide 225
 Its lucid orb, a more than human form
 Emerging lean'd majestic o'er my head,
 And instant thunder shook the conscious grove.
 Then melted into air the liquid cloud,
 And all the shining vision stood reveal'd. 230
 A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,
 And o'er his shoulder, mantling to his knee,
 Flow'd the transparent robe, around his waist
 Collected with a radiant zone of gold
 Æthereal : there in mystic signs ingrav'd, 235
 I read his office high and sacred name,
 Genius of human kind. Appall'd I gaz'd
 The godlike presence; for athwart his brow
 Displeasure, temper'd with a mild concern,
 Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words 240
 Like distant thunders broke the murm'ring air.

Vain are thy thoughts, O child of mortal birth,
 And impotent thy tongue. Is thy short span
 Capacious of this universal frame ?
 Thy wisdom all-sufficient ? Thou, alas ! 245
 Dost thou aspire to judge between the Lord
 Of nature and his works ? to lift thy voice
 Against the sov'reign order he decreed
 All good and lovely ? to blaspheme the bands
 Of tenderness innate and social love, 250
 Holiest of things ! by which the general orb

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Of being, as with adamantine links,
 Was drawn to perfect union and sustain'd
 From everlasting? Hast thou felt the pangs
 Of soft'ning sorrow, of indignant zeal
 So grievous to the soul, as thence to wish
 The ties of nature broken from thy frame;
 That so thy selfish, unrelenting heart
 May cease to mourn its lot, no longer then
 The wretched heir of evils not its own?
 O fair benevolence of gen'rous minds!
 O man by nature form'd for all mankind!

He spoke; abash'd and silent I remain'd,
 As conscious of my lips' offence, and aw'd
 Before his presence, tho' my secret soul
 Disdain'd the imputation. On the ground
 I fix'd my eyes; till from his airy couch
 He stoop'd sublime, and touching with his hand
 My dazzled forehead, Raise thy sight, he cry'd,
 And let thy sense convince thy erring tongue.

I look'd, and lo! the former scene was chang'd;
 For verdant alleys and surrounding trees,
 A solitary prospect, wide and wild,
 Rush'd on my senses. 'Twas a horrid pile
 Of hills with many a shaggy forest mix'd,
 With many a sable cliff and glitt'ring stream.
 Aloft recumbent o'er the hanging ridge,

The brown woods wav'd, while ever trickling
springs

Wash'd from the naked roots of oak and pine,
The crumbling soil; and still at every fall 280
Down the steep windings of the channel'd rock,
Remurm'ring rush'd the congregated floods
With hoarser inundation; till at last

They reach'd a grassy plain, which from the skirts
Of that high desert spread her verdant lap, 285
And drank the gushing moisture, where confin'd
In one smooth current, o'er the lili'd vale
Clearer than glass it flow'd. Autumnal spoils
Luxuriant spreading to the rays of morn,
Blush'd o'er the cliffs, whose half-incircling mound
As in a sylvan theatre inclos'd

That flow'ry level. On the river's brink
I spy'd a fair pavilion, which diffus'd
Its floating umbrage 'mid the silver shade
Of osiers, Now the western sun reveal'd 295
Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,
And pour'd across the shadow of the hills,
On rocks and floods, a yellow stream of light
That cheer'd the solemn scene. My list'ning pow'rs
Were aw'd, and every thought in silence hung, 300
And wond'ring expectation. Then the voice
Of that coelestial pow'r, the mystic show
Declaring, thus my deep attention call'd.

Inhabitant

Inhabitant of earth, to whom is giv'n
 The gracious ways of providence to learn, 305
 Receive my sayings with a stedfast ear——
 Know then, the sov'reign spirit of the world,
 Tho' self-collected from eternal time,
 Within his own deep essence he beheld
 The circling bounds of happiness unite ; 310
 Yet

Inhabitant of earth, &c.] The account of the œconomy of providence here introduced, as the most proper to calm and satisfy the mind, when under the compunction of private evils, seems to have come originally from the *Pythagorean* school : but of all the ancient philosophers, *Plato* has most largely insisted upon it, has established it with all the strength of his capacious understanding, and ennobled it with all the magnificence of his divine imagination. He has one passage so full and clear on the head, that I am persuaded the reader will be pleased to see it here, tho' somewhat long. Addressing himself to such as are not satisfied concerning divine providence, *The being who presides over the whole*, says he, *has dispos'd and complicated all things for the happiness and virtue of the whole, every part of which, according to the extent of its influence, does and suffers what is fit and proper. One of these parts is yours, O unhappy man ! which tho' in itself most inconsiderable and minute, yet being connected with the universe, ever seeks to co-operate with that supreme order. You in the mean time are ignorant of the very end for which all particular natures are brought into existence ; that the all-comprehending nature of the whole may be perfect and happy ; existing, as it does, not for your sake, but the cause and reason of your existence, which, as in the symmetry of every artificial work, must of necessity concur with the general design of the artist, and be subservient to the whole of which it is a part. Your complaint therefore is ignorant and groundless ; since according to the various energy of creation,*
 and

Yet by immense benignity inclin'd
 To spread around him that primæval joy
 Which fill'd himself, he rais'd his plastic arm,
 And sounded thro' the hollow depth of space
 The strong, creative mandate. Strait arose 315
 These heav'nly orbs, the glad abodes of life
 Effusive kindled by his breath divine
 Thro' endless forms of being. Each inhal'd

and the common laws of nature, there is a constant provision of that which is best at the same time for you and for the whole. — For the governing intelligence clearly beholding all the actions of animated and self-moving creatures, and that mixture of good and evil which diversifies them, considered first of all by what disposition of things, and what situation of each individual in the general system, vice might be depressed and subdued, and virtue made secure of victory and happiness with the greatest facility and in the highest degree possible. In this manner he order'd thro' the entire circle of being, the internal constitution of every mind, where should be its station in the universal fabric, and thro' what variety of circumstances it should proceed in the whole tenor of its existence. He goes on in his sublime manner to assert a future state of retribution, as well for those who, by the exercise of good dispositions being harmonized and assimilated to the divine virtue, are consequently removed to a place of unblemish'd sanctity and happiness; as of those who by the most flagitious arts have arisen from contemptible beginnings to the greatest affluence and power, and whom therefore you look upon as unanswerable instances of negligence in the Gods, because you are ignorant of the purposes to which they are subservient, and in what manner they contribute to that supreme intention of good to the whole. Plato de Leg. x. 16.

This theory has been deliver'd of late, especially abroad, in a manner which subverts the freedom of human actions; whereas Plato appears very careful to preserve it, and has been in that respect imitated by the best of his followers.

From

BOOK II. OF IMAGINATION.

47

From him its portion of the vital flame,
In measure such, that from the wide complex
Of coexistent orders, *one* might rise,
One order, all-involving and intire.

He too beholding in the sacred light
Of his essential reason, all the shapes
Of swift contingence, all successive ties
Of action propagated thro' the sum
Of possible existence, he at once,

325

Down the long series of eventful time,
So fix'd the dates of being, so dispos'd,
To every living soul of every kind,
The field of motion and the hour of rest,
That all conspir'd to his supreme design,
To universal good; with full accord,
Answ'ring the mighty model he had chose,
The best and fairest of unnumber'd worlds

330

335

That

— *one might rise,*

One order, &c.] See the meditations of *Antoninus*, and the characteristics, *passim*.

The best and fairest, &c.] This opinion is so old, that *Timeus Locrus* calls the supreme being, *δαιμουργός τῆς βελ-
τίστης*, the artificer of that which is best; and represents him as resolving in the beginning to produce the most excellent work, and as copying the world most exactly from his own intelligible and essential idea; so that it yet remains, as it was at first, perfect in beauty, and will never stand in need of any correction or improvement. There is no room for a caution here, to understand these expressions, not of

That lay from everlasting in the store
 Of his divine conceptions. Nor content,
 By *one* exertion of creating pow'r,
 His goodness to reveal; thro' every age,
 Thro' every moment up the tract of time, 340
 His parent-hand with ever-new increase
 Of happiness and virtue has adorn'd
 The vast harmonious frame: his parent-hand,
 From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore,
 To men, to angels, to celestial minds, 345
 For ever leads the generations on
 To higher scenes of being; while supply'd
 From day to day by his invivifying breath,
 Inferior orders in succession rise
 To fill the void below. As flame ascends, 350
 As bodies to their proper center move,
 As the poiz'd ocean to th' attracting moon
 Obedient swells, and every headlong stream
 Devolves its winding waters to the main;
 So all things which have life aspire to GOD, 355
 The sun of being, boundless, unimpair'd,

of any particular circumstances of human life separately
 consider'd, but of the sum or universal system of life and
 being. See also the vision at the end of the *Theodicæ* of
Leibnitz.

As flame ascends, &c.] This opinion, tho' not held by
 Plato or any of the ancients, is yet a very natural conse-
 quence of his principles. But the disquisition is too com-
 plex and extensive to be enter'd upon here.

Center of souls! Nor does the faithful voice
Of nature cease to prompt their eager steps
Aright; nor is the care of heav'n withheld
From granting to the task proportion'd aid; 360
That in their stations all may persevere
To climb th' ascent of being, and approach
For ever nearer to the life divine.

That rocky pile thou see'st, that verdant lawn
Fresh-water'd from the mountains. Let the scene
Paint in thy fancy the primæval seat
Of man, and where the will supreme ordain'd
His mansion, that pavilion fair-diffus'd
Along the shady brink, in this recess
To wear th' appointed season of his youth; 370
Till riper hours should open to his toil
The high communion of superior minds,
Of consecrated heroes and of gods.
Nor did the fire omnipotent forget
His tender bloom to cherish; nor withheld 375
Cœlestial footsteps from his green abode.
Oft from the radiant honours of his throne,
He sent whom most he lov'd, the sov'reign fair,
The effluence of his glory, whom he plac'd
Before his eyes for ever to behold; 380
The goddess from whose inspiration flows
The toil of patriots, the delight of friends;
Without whose work divine, in heav'n or earth,
G Nought

Nought lovely, nought propitious comes to pass,
 Nor hope, nor praise, nor honour. Her the fire
 Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind,
 The folded pow'rs to open, to direct
 The growth luxuriant of his young desires,
 And from the laws of this majestic world
 To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph
 Her daily care attended, by her side
 With constant steps her gay companion stay'd,
 The fair Euphrosyné, the gentle queen
 Of smiles, and graceful gladness, and delights
 That cheer alike the hearts of mortal men 395
 And pow'rs immortal. See the shining pair!
 Behold, where from his dwelling now disclos'd,
 They quit their youthful charge and seek the skies.

I look'd, and on the flow'ry turf there stood,
 Between two radiant forms, a smiling youth 400
 Whose tender cheeks display'd the vernal flow'r
 Of beauty; sweetest innocence illum'd
 His bashful eyes, and on his polish'd brow
 Sate young simplicity. With fond regard
 He view'd th' associates, as their steps they mov'd
 The younger chief his ardent eyes detain'd, 405
 With mild regret invoking her return.
 Bright as the star of evening she appear'd
 Amid the dusky scene. Eternal youth
 O'er all her form its glowing honours breath'd;
 And

And smiles eternal, from her candid eyes,
 Flow'd like the dewy lustre of the morn
 Effusive trembling on the placid waves.
 The spring of heav'n had shed its blushing spoils
 To bind her sable tresses: full diffus'd 415
 Her yellow mantle floated in the breeze;
 And in her hand she wav'd a living branch
 Rich with immortal fruits, of pow'r to calm
 The wrathful heart, and from the bright'ning eyes
 To chase the cloud of sadness. More sublime 420
 The heav'nly part'ner mov'd. The prime of age
 Compos'd her steps. The presence of a god,
 High on the circle of her brow inthron'd,
 From each majestic motion darted awe,
 Devoted awe! till, cherish'd by her looks 425
 Benevolent and meek, confiding love
 To filial rapture soften'd all the soul,
 Free in her graceful hand she poiz'd the sword
 Of chaste dominion. An heroic crown
 Display'd the old simplicity of pomp 430
 Around her honour'd head. A matron's robe,
 White as the sunshine streams thro vernal clouds,
 Her stately form invested. Hand in hand
 Th' immortal pair forsook th' enamell'd green,
 Ascending slowly. Rays of limpid light 435
 Gleam'd round their path; cœlestial rounds were
 heard,

And thro' the fragrant air ætherial dews

Distill'd around them; till at once the clouds
 Disparting wide in midway sky, withdrew
 Their airy veil, and left a bright expanse 440
 Of empyréan flame, where spent and drown'd
 Afflicted vision plung'd in vain to scan
 What object it involv'd. My feeble eyes
 Indur'd not. Bending down to earth I stood,
 With dumb attention. Soon a female voice, 445
 As watry murmurs sweet, or warbling shades,
 With sacred invocation thus began.

Father of gods and mortals! whose right arm
 With reins eternal guides the moving heav'ns,
 Bend thy propitious ear. Behold well-pleas'd 450
 I seek to finish thy divine decree.
 With frequent steps I visit yonder seat
 Of man, thy offspring; from the tender seeds
 Of justice and of wisdom, to evolve
 The latent honours of his generous frame; 455
 Till thy conducting hand shall raise his lot
 From earth's dim scene to these ætherial walks,
 The temple of thy glory. But not me,
 Not my directing voice he oft requires,
 Or hears delighted: this enchanting maid, 460
 Th' associate thou hast giv'n me, her alone
 He loves, O father! absent, her he craves;
 And but for her glad presence ever join'd,
 Rejoices not in mine: that all my hopes

This

Book II. of IMAGINATION.

53

This thy benignant purpose to fulfil,
I deem uncertain; and my daily cares
Unfruitful all and vain, unless by thee
Still farther aided in the work divine.

465

She ceas'd; a voice more awful thus reply'd. 470
O thou! in whom for ever I delight,
Fairer than all th' inhabitants of heaven,
Best image of thy author! far from thee
Be disappointment, or distaste, or blame;
Who soon or late shalt every work fulfil, 475
And no resistance find. If man refuse
To hearken to thy dictates; or allur'd
By meaner joys, to any other pow'r
Transfer the honours due to thee alone;
That joy which he pursues he ne'er shall taste,
That pow'r in whom delighteth ne'er behold. 480
Go then once more, and happy be thy toil;
Go then! but let not this thy smiling friend
Partake thy footsteps. In her stead, behold!
With thee the son of Nemesis I send;
The fiend abhorr'd! whose vengeance takes ac-
count 485

Of sacred order's violated laws.
See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,
Fierce to exhaust the tempest of his wrath
On yon devoted head. But thou, my child,
Controul his cruel frenzy, and protect 490
Thy

Thy tender charge. That when despair shall grasp
 His agonizing bosom, he may learn,
 Then he may learn to love the gracious hand
 Alone sufficient in that hour of ill,
 To save his feeble spirit; then confess 495
 Thy genuine honours, O excelling fair!
 When all the plagues that wait the deadly will
 Of this avenging dæmon, all the storms
 Of night infernal, serve but to display
 The energy of thy superior charms 500
 With mildest aw triumphant o'er his rage,
 And shining clearer in the horrid gloom.

Here ceas'd that awful voice, and soon I felt
 The cloudy curtain of refreshing eve :
 Was clos'd once more, from that immortal fire
 Shelt'ring my eye-lids. Looking up, I view'd
 A vast gigantic spectre striding on
 Thro' murm'ring thunders and a waste of clouds,
 With dreadful action. Black as night his brow
 Relentless frowns involv'd. His savage limbs 510
 With sharp impatience vio'ent he writh'd,
 As thro' convulsive anguish; and his hand
 Arm'd with a scorpion-lash, full oft he rais'd
 In madness to his bosom; while his eyes
 Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud he shook
 The void with horror. Silent by his side
 The virgin came. No discomposure stirr'd

Her

BOOK. II. of IMAGINATION. 55

Her features. From the glooms which hung around,
No stain of darkness mingled with the beam
Of her divine effulgence. Now they stoop 520
Upon the river-bank; and now to hail
His wonted guests, with eager steps advanc'd
The unsuspecting inmate of the shade.

As when a famish'd wolf, that all night long
Had rang'd the Alpine snows, by chance at morn 525
Sees from a cliff incumbent o'er the smoke
Of some lone village, a neglected kid
That strays along the wild for herb or spring;
Down from the winding ridge he sweeps amain,
And thinks he tears him: so with tenfold rage, 530
The monster sprung remorseless on his prey.
Amaz'd the stripling stood; with panting breast
Feebly he pour'd the lamentable wail
Of helpless consternation, struck at once,
And rooted to the ground. The queen beheld 535
His terror, and with looks of tend'rest care
Advanc'd to save him. Soon the tyrant felt
Her awful pow'r. His keen, tempestuous arm
Hung nerveless, nor descended where his rage
Had aim'd the deadly blow: then dumb retir'd 540
With sullen rancour. Lo! the sov'reign maid
Folds with a mother's arms the fainting boy,
Till life rekindles in his rosy cheek;
Then grasps his hand, and cheers him with her
tongue. O

O wake thee, rouse thy spirit! shall the spite 545
 Of yon tormentor thus appal thy heart,
 While I, thy friend and guardian, am at hand
 To rescue and to heal? O let thy soul
 Remember, what the will of heav'n ordains
 Is ever good for all; and if for all, 550
 Then good for thee. Nor only by the warmth
 And soothing sunshine of delightful things,
 Do minds grow up and flourish. Oft misled
 By that bland light, the young unpractis'd views
 Of reason wander thro' a fatal road, 555
 Far from their native aim: as if to ly
 Inglorious in the fragrant shade, and wait
 The soft access of ever-circling joys,
 Were all the end of being. Ask thy self,
 This pleasing error did it never lull 560
 Thy wishes. Has thy constant heart refus'd
 The silken fetters of delicious ease?
 Or when divine Euphrosyné appear'd
 Within this dwelling, did not thy desires
 Hang far below that measure of thy fate, 565
 Which I reveal'd before thee? and thy eyes,
 Impatient of my counsels, turn away
 To drink the soft effusion of her smiles?
 Know then, for this the everlasting fire
 Deprives thee of her presence, and instead, 570
 O wise and still benevolent! ordains

This

This horrid visage hither to pursue
 My steps; that so thy nature may discern
 Its real good, and what alone can save
 Thy feeble spirit in this hour of ill 575
 From folly and despair. O yet belov'd!
 Let not this headlong terror quite o'erwhelm
 Thy scatter'd pow'rs; nor fatal deem the rage
 Of this tormentor, nor his proud assault,
 While I am here to vindicate thy toil, 580
 Above the generous question of thy arm,
 Brave by thy fears, and in thy weakness strong,
 This hour he triumphs; but confront his might,
 And dare him to the combat, then with ease
 Disarm'd and quell'd, his fierceness he resigns 585
 To bondage and to scorn: while thus inur'd
 By watchful danger, by unceasing toil,
 Th' immortal mind, superior to his fate,
 Amid the outrage of external things,
 Firm as the solid base of this great world, 590
 Rests on his own foundations. Blow, ye winds!
 Ye waves! ye thunders! rowl your tempest on;
 Shake, ye old pillars of the marble sky!
 Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire
 Be loosen'd from their seats; yet still serene, 595
 Th' unconquer'd mind looks down upon the wreck,
 And ever stronger as the storms advance,
 Firm thro' the closing ruin holds his way,
 Where nature calls him to the destin'd goal.

So spake the goddess; while thro' all her frame 600
 Cœlestial raptures flow'd, in every word,
 In ev'ry motion kindling warmth divine
 To seize who listen'd. Vehement and swift
 As light'ning fires the aromatic shade
 In Æthiopian fields, the stripling felt 605
 Her inspiration catch his fervid soul,
 And starting from his languor thus exclaim'd.

Then let the trial come! and witness thou,
 If terror be upon me; if I shrink
 To meet the storm, or falter in my strength 610
 When hardest it besets me. Do not think
 That I am fearful and infirm of soul,
 As late thy eyes beheld: for thou hast chang'd
 My nature; thy commanding voice has wak'd
 My languid pow'rs to bear me boldly on, 615
 Where'er the will divine my path ordains
 Thro' toil or peril: only do not thou
 Forsake me; O be thou for ever near,
 That I may listen to thy sacred voice,
 And guide by thy decrees my constant feet. 620
 But say, for ever are my eyes bereft?
 Say, shall the fair Euphrosyné not once
 Appear again to charm me? Thou, in heav'n!
 O thou eternal arbiter of things!
 Be thy great bidding done: for who am I 625
 To

To question thy appointment? Let the frowns
 Of this avenger every morn o'ercast
 The chearful dawn, and every evening damp
 With double night my dwelling; I will learn
 To hail them both, and unrepining bear 630
 His hateful presence: but permit my tongue
 One glad request, and if my deeds may find
 Thy awful eye propitious, O restore
 The rosy featur'd maid; again to chear
 This lonely seat, and bless me with her smiles. 635
 He spoke; when instant, thro' the sable glooms
 With which that furious presence had involv'd
 The ambient air, a flood of radiance came
 Swift as the lightning-flash; the melting clouds
 Flew diverse, and amid the blew serene 640
 Euphrosyné appear'd. With sprightly step
 The nymph alighted on th' irriguous lawn,
 And to her wond'ring audience thus begun.

Lo! I am here to answer to your vows,
 And be the meeting fortunate! I come 645
 With joyful tidings; we shall part no more —
 Hark! how the gentle Echo from her cell
 Talks thro' the cliffs, and murm'ring o'er the stream
 Repeats the accent; we shall part no more.
 O my delightful friends! well-pleas'd on high 650
 The father has beheld you, while the might
 Of that stern foe with bitter trial prov'd

H 2

Your

Your equal doings: then for ever spake
 The high decree; that thou, cœlestial maid!
 Howe'er that grisly phantom on thy steps 655
 May sometimes dare intrude, yet never more
 Shalt thou descending to th' abode of man,
 Alone endure the rancour of his arm,
 Or leave thy lov'd Euphrosyné behind.
 She ended; and the whole romatic scene 660
 Immediate vanish'd: rocks, and woods, and rills,
 The mantling tent, and each mysterious form
 Flew like the pictures of a morning dream,
 When sun-shine fills the bed. A while I stood
 Perplex'd and giddy; till the radiant pow'r 665
 Who bade the visionary landskip rise,
 As up to him I turn'd, with gentlest looks
 Preventing my inquiry, thus began.

There let thy soul acknowledge its complaint
 How blind, how impious! There behold the ways
 Of heav'n's eternal destiny to man,
 For ever just, benevolent and wise:
 That VIRTUE's awful steps, howe'er pursu'd
 By vexing fortune and intrusive PAIN,
 Should never be divided from her chaste, 675
 Her fair attendant, PLEASURE. Need I urge
 Thy tardy thought thro' all the various round
 Of this existence, that thy soft'ning soul
 At length may learn what energy the hand

Of virtue mingles in the bitter tide 680
 Of passion swelling with distress and pain,
 To mitigate the sharp with gracious drops
 Of cordial pleasure? Ask the faithful youth,
 Why the cold urn of her whom long he lov'd
 So often fills his arms; so often draws 685
 His lonely footsteps at the silent hour,
 To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
 O! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds
 Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego
 That sacred hour, when stealing from the noise 690
 Of care and envy, sweet remembrance sooths
 With virtue's kindest looks his aking breast,
 And turns his tears to rapture— Ask the crowd
 Which flies impatient from the village-walk
 To climb the neighb'ring cliffs, when far below
 The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coast
 Some helpless bark; while sacred pity melts
 The general eye, or terror's icy hand
 Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair;
 While every mother closer to her breast 700
 Catches her child, and pointing where the waves
 Foam thro' the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud
 As one poor wretch that spreads his piteous arms
 For succour, swallow'd by the roaring surge,
 As now another, dash'd against the rock, 705
 Drops lifeless down: O deamest thou indeed
 No kind indearment here by nature giv'n

To

To mutual terror and compassion's tears?
 No sweetly-melting softness which attracts,
 O'er all that edge of pain, the social pow'rs 710
 To this their proper action and their end?
 —Ask thy own heart. When at the midnight hour,
 Slow thro' that studious gloom, thy pausing eye
 Led by the glimm'ring taper moves around
 The sacred volumes of the dead; the songs 715
 Of Græcian bards, and records wrote by fame
 For Græcian heroes, where the present pow'r
 Of heav'n and earth surveys th' immortal page,
 Ev'n as a father blessing, while he reads
 The praises of his son. If then thy soul, 720
 Spurning the yoke of these inglorious days,
 Mix in their deeds, and kindle with their flame;
 Say; when the prospect blackens on thy view,
 When rooted from the base, heroic states
 Mourn in the dust and tremble at the frown 725
 Of curst ambition; when the pious band
 Of youths who fought for freedom and their fires,
 Lie side by side in gore; when ruffian-pride
 Usurps the throne of justice, turns the pomp
 Of public pow'r, the majesty of rule, 730
 The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,

—[*when the pious band, &c.*] The reader will here
 naturally recollect the fate of the *sacred battalion* of *Thebes*,
 which at the battle of *Cheronæa* was utterly destroy'd, e-
 very man being found lying dead by his friend.

To

To slavish, empty pageants, to adorn
 A tyrant's walk, and glitter in the eyes
 Of such as bow the knee; when honour'd urns
 Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful bust 735
 And storied arch, to glut the coward-rage
 Of regal envy, strew the public way
 With hallow'd ruins; when the muse's haunt,
 The marble porch where wisdom wont to talk
 With Socrates or Tully, hears no more, 470
 Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,
 Or female superstition's midnight pray'r;
 When ruthless rapine from the hand of time
 Tears the destroying scythe, with surer blow
 To sweep the works of glory from their base; 745
 Till desolation o'er the grass-grown street
 Expands his raven-wings, and up the wall,
 Where senates once the price of monarch's doom'd
 Hisses the gliding snake thro' hoary weeds
 That clasp the mould'ring column; thus defac'd,
 Thus widely mournful when the prospect thrills
 Thy beating bosom, when the patriot's tear
 Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
 In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
 To fire the impious wreath on Philip's brow, 755
 Or dash Octavius from the trophied car;
 Say, does thy secret soul repine to taste

Philip.] The Macedonian.

The

The big distress? or would'st thou then exchange
 Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot
 Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd 760
 Of mute barbarians bending to his nod,
 And bears aloft his gold-invested front,
 And says within himself, " I am a king,
 " And wherefore should the clam'rous voice of woe
 " Intrude upon mine ear? — The baleful dreggs
 Of these late ages, this inglorious draught
 Of servitude and folly, have not yet,
 Blest be th' eternal ruler of the world!
 Defil'd to such a depth of sordid shame
 The native honours of the human soul, 778
 Nor so effac'd the image of its sire.

End of the SECOND BOOK.



ARGU-

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of woe
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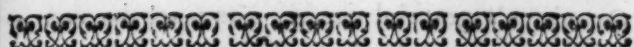
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T H E
P L E A S U R E S
O F
I M A G I N A T I O N .

B O O K the T H I R D .

ARGUMENT of the THIRD BOOK.

PLEASURE in observing the tempers and manners of men, even where vicious or absurd ; v. 1, to 14. The origin of vice, from false representations of the fancy, producing false opinions concerning good and evil ; v. 14, to 62. Inquiry into ridicule ; v. 73. The general sources of ridicule in the minds and characters of men enumerated ; v. 14, to 240. Final cause of the sense of ridicule ; v. 263. The resemblance of certain aspects of inanimate things to the sensations and properties of the mind ; v. 282, to 311. The operations of the mind in the production of the works of imagination, described ; v. 358, to 414. The secondary pleasure from imitation ; to v. 436. The benevolent order of the world illustrated in the arbitrary connection of these pleasures with the objects which excite them ; v. 458, to 514. The nature and conduct of taste ; v. 515, to 567. Concluding with an account of the natural and moral advantages resulting from a sensible and well form'd imagination.



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THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.
Book the THIRD.

W HAT wonder therefore, since th' indearing
ties

Of passion link the universal kind
Of man so close, what wonder if to search
This common nature thro' the various change
Of sex, and age, and fortune, and the frame 5
Of each peculiar, draw the busy mind
With unresisted charms? The spacious west,
And all the teeming regions of the south
Hold not a quarry, to the curious flight
Of knowledge, half so tempting or so fair, 10
As man to man. Nor only where the smiles
Of love invite; nor only where th' applause
Of cordial honour turns th' attentive eye

On virtue's graceful deeds. For since the course
 Of things external acts in different ways 15
 On human apprehensions as the hand
 Of nature temper'd to a different frame
 Peculiar minds; so hap'ly where the pow'rs
 Of fancy neither lessen nor enlarge
 The images of things, but paint in all 20
 Their genuine hues, the features which they wore
 In

—Where the pow'rs
 Of fancy, &c.] The influence of the imagination on the
 conduct of life is one of the most important points in
 moral philosophy. It were easy by an induction of facts to
 prove that the imagination directs almost all the passions,
 and mixes with almost every circumstance of action or
 pleasure. Let any man, even of the coldest head and so-
 berest industry, analyse the idea of what he calls his in-
 terest; he will find that it consists chiefly of certain ima-
 ges of decency, beauty and order, variously combined in-
 to one system, the idol which he seeks to enjoy by la-
 bour, hazard, and self-denial. It is on this account of
 the last consequence to regulate these images by the stand-
 ard of nature and the general good; otherwise the ima-
 gination, by heightening some objects beyond their real
 excellence and beauty, or by representing others in a more
 odious or terrible shape than they deserve, may of course
 engage us in pursuits utterly inconsistent with the laws of
 the moral order.

If it be objected, that this account of things supposes
 the passions to be merely accidental, whereas there ap-
 pears in some a natural and hereditary disposition to cer-
 tain passions prior to all circumstances of education or
 fortune; it may be answered, that tho' no man is born
ambitious or a *miser*, yet he may inherit from his parents
 a peculiar temper or complexion of mind, which shall
 render

In nature; there opinion will be true,
 And action right. For action treads the path
 In which opinion says he follows good,

Or

render his imagination more liable to be struck with some particular objects, consequently dispose him to form opinions of good and ill, and entertain passions of a particular turn. Some men, for instance, by the original frame of their minds, are more delighted with the vast and magnificent, others on the contrary with the elegant and gentle aspects of nature. And it is very remarkable, that the disposition of the moral powers is always similar to this of the imagination; that those who are most inclined to admire prodigious and sublime objects in the physical world, are also most inclined to applaud examples of fortitude and heroic virtue in the moral. While those who are charm'd rather with the *delicacy* and *sweetness* of colours, and forms, and sounds, never fail in like manner to yield the preference to the softer scenes of virtue, and the sympathies of a domestic life. And this is sufficient to account for the objection.

Among the ancient philosophers, tho' we have several hints concerning this influence of the imagination upon morals among the remains of the *Socratic* school, yet the *Stoics* were the first who paid it a due attention. *Zeno*, their founder, thought it impossible to preserve any tolerable regularity in life, without frequently inspecting those pictures or appearances of things which the imagination offers to the mind. [*Diog. Laert. l. vii.*] The meditations of *M. Aurelius*, and the discourses of *Epictetus*, are full of the same sentiments; insomuch that this latter makes the *Χρησις τῆς αἰδέου φασιαν*, or right management of the fancies, the only thing for which we are accountable to providence, and without which a man is no other than stupid or frantic. *Arrian. l. i. c. 12. & l. ii. c. 22.* See also the *Characteristics*, vol. i. from p. 313, to p. 321. where this *Stoical* doctrine is embellished with all the eloquence of the graces of *Plato*.

Or flies from evil; and opinion gives
Report of good or evil, as the scene
Was drawn by fancy, lovely or deform'd:
Thus her report can never there be true,
Where fancy cheats the intellectual eye,
With glaring colours and distorted lines.
Is there a man, who at the sound of death,
Sees ghastly shapes of terror conjur'd up,
And black before him; nought but death-bed
groans,
And fearful pray'rs, and plunging from the brink
Of light and being, down the gloomy air,
An unknown depth? Alas! in such a mind,
If no bright forms of excellence attend
The image of his country; nor the pomp
Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice
Of justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes
The conscious bosom with a patriot's flame;
Will not opinion tell him, that to die,
Or stand the hazard, is a greater ill
Than to *betray* his country? And in act
Will he not chuse to be a wretch and live?
Here vice begins then. From th'enchanting cup
Which fancy holds to all, th' unwary thirst
Of youth oft swallows a Circæan draught,
That sheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye
Of reason, till no longer he discerns,
And only guides to err. Then revel forth

25 A furious band that spurn him from the throne;
And all is uproar. Thus ambition grasps
The empire of the soul: thus pale revenge
Unsheaths her murd'rous dagger; and the hands
Of lust and rapine, with unholy arts,
30 Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws
That keeps them from their prey: thus all the
plagues
The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling scene
The tragic muse discloses, under shapes 60
Of honour, safety, pleasure, ease or pomp,
Stole first into the mind. Yet not by all
Those lying forms which fancy in the brain
Engenders, are the kindling passions driv'n
To guilty deeds; nor reason bound in chains, 65
That vice alone may lord it: oft adorn'd
With solemn pageants, folly mounts his throne;
And plays her ideot-anticks like a queen.
A thousand garbs she wears; a thousand ways
She wheels her giddy empire—Lo! thus far 70
With bold adventure, to the Mantuan lyre
I sing of nature's charms, and touch well-pleas'd
A stricter note: now haply must my song
Unbend her serious measure, and reveal
In lighter strains, how folly's awkward arts 75
Ex-

50

A

—how folly's awkward arts, &c.] Notwithstanding
the general influence of ridicule on private and civil life, as
well

Excite impetuous laughter's gay rebuke;
The sportive province of the comic muse.

See! in what crouds the uncouth forms advance,
Each would outstrip the other, each prevent
Our careful search, and offer to your gaze, 80
Unask'd his motely features. Wait awhile,
My curious friends! and let us first arrange
In proper orders your promiscuous throng.

Behold the foremost band; of slender thought,
And easy faith; whom flatt'ring fancy sooths 85
With lying spectres, in themselves to view
Illustrious forms of excellence and good,
That scorn the mansion. With exulting hearts
They spread their spurious treasure to the sun
And bid the world admire! but chief the glance
Of wishful envy draws their joy-bright eyes,

And

well as on learning and the sciences, it has been almost constantly neglected or misrepresented, by divines especially. The manner of treating these subjects in the science of human nature should be precisely the same as in natural philosophy; from particular facts to investigate the stated order in which they appear, and then apply the general law, thus discovered, to the explication of other appearances and the improvement of useful arts.

Behold the foremost band, &c.] The first and most general source of ridicule in the characters of men, is vanity or self-applause for some desirable quality or possession which evidently does not belong to those who assume it.

And lifts with self-applause each lordly brow.
 In number boundless as the blooms of spring,
 Behold their glaring idols, empty shapes
 By fancy gilded o'er, and then set up 95
 For adoration. Some in learning's garb,
 With formal band and fable-cinctur'd gown,
 And rags of mouldy volumes. Some elate
 With martial splendour, steely pikes, and swords
 Of costly frame, and gay Phœnician robes 100
 Inwrought with flow'ring gold, assume the port
 Of stately valour: list'ning by his side
 There stands a female form; to her, with looks
 Of earnest import, pregnant with amaze,
 He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, storms, 105
 And sulph'rous mines, and ambush: then at once
 Breaks off, and smiles to see her look so pale,
 And asks some wond'ring question of her fears.
 Others of graver mein; behold, adorn'd
 With holy ensigns, how sublime they move, 110
 And bending oft their sanctimonious eyes,
 Take homage of the simple-minded throng;
 Ambassadors of heav'n! Nor much unlike
 Is he whose visage, in the lazy mist
 That mantles every feature, hides a brood 115
 Of politic conceits; of whispers, nods,
 And hints deep-omen'd with unweildy schemes,
 And dark portents of state. Ten thousand more,
 Prodigious habits and tumultuous tongues,

K

Pour

Pour dauntless in and swell the boastful band. 120

Then comes the second order; all who seek
 The debt of praise, where watchful unbelief
 Darts thro' the thin pretence her squinting eye
 On some retir'd appearance which belies
 The boasted virtue, or annuls th' applause 125
 That justice else would pay. Here side by side
 I see two leaders of the solemn train,
 Approaching: one a female, old and grey,
 With eyes demure and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,
 Pale as the cheeks of death; yet still she stuns 130
 The sickning audience with a nauseous tale;
 How many youths her myrtle chains have worn,
 How many virgins at her triumphs pin'd!
 Yet how resolv'd she guards her cautious heart;
 Such is her terror at the risques of love, 135
 And man's seducing tongue! The other seems
 A bearded sage, ungentle in his mien,
 And fordid all his habit; peevish want
 Grins at his heels, while down the gazing throng
 He stalks, resounding in magnific phrase 140
 The vanity of riches, the contempt

Of

Then comes the second order, &c.] Ridicule from the same
 vanity, where tho' the possession be real, yet no merit
 can arise from it, because of some particular circumstan-
 ces, which, tho' obvious to the spectator, are yet over-
 look'd by the ridiculous character.

Book III. of IMAGINATION. 75

Of pomp and pow'r. Be prudent in your zeal,
 Ye grave associates! let the silent grace
 Of her who blushes at the fond regard
 Her charms inspire, more eloquent unfold 145
 The praise of spotless honour: let the man
 Whose eye regards not his illustrious pomp
 And ample store, but as indulgent streams
 To cheer the barren soil and spread the fruits
 Of joy, let him by juster measure fix 150
 The price of riches and the end of pow'r.

Another tribe succeeds; deluded long
 By fancy's dazzling optics, these behold
 The images of some peculiar things
 With brighter hues resplendent, and portray'd 155
 With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd
 Their genuine objects. Hence the fever'd heart
 Pants with delirious hope for tinsel charms;
 Hence oft obtrusive on the eye of scorn,
 Untimely zeal her witless pride betrays; 160
 And serious manhood from the tow'ring aim
 Of wisdom, stoops to emulate the boast
 Of childish toil. Behold yon mystic form,
 Bedeck'd with feathers, insects, weeds and shells!
 Not with intenser brow the Samian sage 165

Another tribe succeeds, &c.] Ridicule from a notion of
 excellence in particular objects disproportion'd to their
 intrinsic value, and inconsistent with the order of nature.

Bent his fix'd eye on heav'n's eternal fires;
 When first the order of that radiant scene
 Swell'd his exulting thought, than this surveys
 A muckworm's entrails or a spider's fang.
 Next him a youth with flow'rs and myrtles crown'd,
 Attends that virgin-form, and blushing knees,
 With fondest gesture and a suppliant's tongue,
 To win her coy regard: adieu, for him,
 The dull engagements of the bustling world!
 Adieu the sick impertinence of praise! 175
 And hope, and action! for with her alone,
 By streams and shades, to steal the sighing hours,
 Is all he asks, and all that fate can give!
 Thee too, facetious Momion, wandring here,
 Thee, dreaded censor! oft have I beheld 180
 Bewilder'd unwares: alas! too long
 Flush'd with thy comic triumphs and the spoils
 Of sly derision! till on every side
 Hurling thy random bolts, offended truth
 Assign'd thee here thy station with the slaves 185
 Of folly. Thy once formidable name
 Shall grace her humble records, and be heard
 In scoffs and mock'ry bandied from the lips
 Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,
 So oft the patient victims of thy scorn. 190

But now, ye gay! to whom indulgent fate;
 Of all the muse's empire hath assign'd
 The fields of folly, hither each advance
 Your sickles; here the teeming soil affords
 Its richest growth. A fav'rite brood appears; 195
 In whom the dæmon, with a mother's joy
 Views all her charms reflected, all her cares
 At full repay'd. Ye most illustrious band!
 Who scorning reason's tame, pedantic rules
 And order's vulgar bondage, never meant 200
 For souls sublime as yours, with generous zeal
 Pay vice the rev'rence virtue long usurp'd,
 And yield deformity the fond applause
 Which beauty wont to claim; forgive my song
 That for the blushing diffidence of youth, 205
 It shuns the unequal province of your praise.

Thus far triumphant in the pleasing guile
 Of bland imagination, folly's train
 Have dar'd our search: but now a dastard-kind
 Advance reluctant, and with fault'ring feet 210
 Shrink from the gazer's eye: infeebled hearts,

But now ye gay, &c.] Ridicule from a notion of excellence, where the object is absolutely odious or contemptible. This is the highest degree of the ridiculous; as in the affectation of diseases or vices.

Thus far triumphant, &c.] Ridicule from false shame or groundless fear.

Whom

Whom fancy chills with visionary fears,
 Or bends to servile tameness with conceits
 Of shame, of evil, or of base defect,
 Fantastic and delusive. Here the slave 215
 Who droops abash'd when sullen pomp surveys
 His humbler habit: here the trembling wretch
 Unnerv'd and froze with terror's icy bolts
 Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in shameful tears,
 At every dream of danger: here subdued 220
 By frontless laughter and the hardy scorn
 Of old, unfeeling vice, the abject soul
 Who blushing half resigns the candid praise
 Of temperance and honour; half disowns
 A freeman's hatred of tyrannic pride; 225
 And hears with sickly smiles the venal mouth
 With foulest licence mock the patriot's name.

Last of the motley bands on whom the pow'r
 Of gay derision bends her hostile aim,
 Is that where shameful ignorance presides. 230
 Beneath her sordid banners, lo! they march,
 Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful hands
 Attempt, confusion strait appears behind,
 And troubles all the work. Thro' many a maze,
 Perplex'd they struggle, changing every path, 235
 O'erturning every purpose; then at last

Last of the, &c.] Ridicule from the ignorance of such
 things as our circumstances require us to know.

Sit down dismay'd, and leave th' entangled scene
 For scorn to sport with. Such then is th' abode
 Of folly in the mind; and such the shapes
 In which she governs her obsequious train. 240
 Thro' every scene of ridicule in things
 To lead the tenour of my devious lay;
 Thro' every swift occasion, which the hand
 Of laughter points at, when the mirthful sting
 Distends her fallying nerves and choaks her tongue;
 What were it but to count each crystal drop
 Which morning's dewy fingers on the blooms
 Of May distill? Suffice it to have said,
 Where'er the pow'r of ridicule displays

Her

—*Suffice it to have said, &c.*] By comparing these general sources of ridicule with each other, and examining the ridiculous in other objects, we may obtain a general definition of it equally applicable to every species. The most important circumstance of this definition is laid down in the lines referred to; but others more minute we shall subjoin here. *Aristotle's* account of the matter seems both imperfect and false; τὸ γὰρ γελοῖον, says he, ἔστιν ἀμείλιμα τι καὶ αἰσχρὸν, ἀνώδυνον καὶ ἰσθαλαττικόν: the ridiculous is some certain fault or turpitude without pain, and not destructive to its subject. (*Poetic. c. v.*) For allowing it to be true, as it is not, that the ridiculous is never accompany'd with pain, yet we might produce many instances of such a fault or turpitude, which cannot with any tolerable propriety be called ridiculous. So that the definition does not distinguish the thing defined. Nay farther, even when we perceive the turpitude tending to the destruction of its subject, we may still be sensible of a ridiculous appearance, till the ruin become imminent, and

Her quaint-ey'd visage, some incongruous form, 250
 Some stubborn dissonance of things combin'd,
 Strikes on the quick observer: whether pomp,
 Or

and the keener sensations of pity or terror banish the ludicrous apprehension from our minds. For the sensation of ridicule is not a bare perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas; but a passion or emotion of the mind consequential to that perception. So that the mind may perceive the agreement or disagreement, and yet not feel the ridiculous, because it is engrossed by a more violent emotion. Thus it happens that some men think those objects ridiculous, to which others cannot endure to apply the name; because in them they excite a much intenser and more important feeling. And this difference, among other causes, has brought a good deal of confusion into this question.

That which makes objects ridiculous is some ground of admiration or esteem connected with other more general circumstances, comparatively worthless or deformed; or it is some circumstance of turpitude or deformity connected with what is in general excellent or beautiful: the inconsistent properties existing either in the objects themselves, or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate; belonging always to the same order or class of being, implying sentiment or design; and exciting no acute or vehement emotion of the heart.

To prove the several parts of this definition: *The appearance of excellence or beauty connected with a general condition comparatively sordid or deformed, is ridiculous; for instance, pompous pretensions to wisdom joined with ignorance and folly in the Socrates of Aristophanes; and the applause of military glory with cowardice and stupidity in the Thrafo of Terence.*

The appearance of deformity or turpitude, in conjunction with what is in general excellent or venerable, is also ridiculous: for instance, the personal weaknesses of a magistrate appearing in the solemn and public functions of his station.

The incongruous properties may either exist in the objects themselves

Or praise, or beauty mix their partial claim
Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,
Where foul deformity are wont to dwell, 255
Or whether these with violation loath'd,
Invade resplendent pomp's imperious mien,
The charms of beauty, or the boast of praise.

Ask we for what fair end, th' almighty fire

themselves, or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate : in the last-mention'd instances they both exist in the objects ; in the instance from *Aristophanes* and *Terence*, one of them is objective and real, the other only founded in the apprehension of the ridiculous character.

The inconsistent properties must belong to the same order or class of being. A Coxcomb in fine cloaths, bedaubed by accident in foul weather, is a ridiculous object ; because his general apprehension of excellence and esteem is referred to the splendour and expence of his dress. A man of sense and merit in the same circumstances, is not counted ridiculous ; because the general ground of excellence and esteem in him, is, both in fact and in his own apprehension, of a very different species.

Every ridiculous object implies sentiment or design. A column placed by an architect without a capital or base, is laugh'd at : the same column in a ruin, causes a very different sensation.

And lastly, *the occurrence must excite no acute or vehement emotion of the heart*, such as terror, pity, or indignation ; for in that case, as was observed above, the mind is not at leisure to contemplate the ridiculous.

Whether any appearance not ridiculous be involved in this description ; and whether it comprehend every species and form of the ridiculous, must be determined by repeated applications of it to particular instances.

Ask we for what fair end, &c.] Since it is beyond all contradiction evident that we have a *natural* sense or feeling of

In mortal bosoms wakes this gay contempt, 260
 These grateful stings of laughter, from disgust
 Educ'ing pleasure? wherefore, but to aid

The

the ridiculous, and since so good a reason may be assign'd to justify the supreme being for bestowing it; one cannot without astonishment reflect on the conduct of those men who imagine it is for the service of true religion to vilify and blacken it without distinction, and endeavour to persuade us that it is never applied but in a bad cause. Ridicule is not concerned with meer speculative truth or falshood. It is not in abstract propositions or theorems, but in actions and passions, good and evil, beauty and deformity, that we find materials for it; and all these terms are *relative*, implying approbation or blame. To ask then *whether ridicule be a test of truth*, is, in other words, to ask whether that which is ridiculous can be *morally true*, can be just and becoming; or whether that which is just and becoming, can be ridiculous. A question that does not deserve a serious answer. For it is most evident, that as in a metaphysical proposition offer'd to the understanding for its assent, the faculty of reason examines the terms of the proposition, and finding one idea which was supposed equal to another, to be in fact unequal, of consequence rejects the proposition as a falshood: so in objects offer'd to the mind for its esteem or applause, the faculty of ridicule feeling an incongruity in the claim, urges the mind to reject it with laughter and contempt. When therefore we observe such a claim, obtruded upon mankind, and the inconsistent circumstances carefully concealed from the eye of the public, it is our business, if the matter be of importance to society, to drag out those latent circumstances, and by setting them full in view, convince the world how ridiculous the claim is; and thus a double advantage is gained; for we both detect the *moral falshood* sooner than in the way of speculative inquiry, and impress the minds of men with a stronger sense of the

The tardy steps of reason, and at once
 By this prompt impulse urge us to depress
 The giddy aims of folly? Tho' the light 265
 Of truth slow-dawning on th' inquiring mind
 At length unfolds, thro' many a subtle tie,
 How these uncouth disorders end at last
 In public evil; yet benignant heav'n

the vanity and error of its authors. And this and no more is meant by the application of ridicule.

But it is said, the practice is dangerous, and may be inconsistent with the regard we owe to objects of real dignity and excellence. I answer, the practice fairly managed can never be dangerous; men may be dishonest in obtruding circumstances foreign to the object, and we may be inadvertent in allowing those circumstances to impose upon us; but the sense of ridicule always judges right: the *Socrates* of *Aristophanes* is as truly ridiculous a character as ever was drawn.— True; but it is not the character of *Socrates*, the divine moralist and father of ancient wisdom. What then? did the ridicule of the poet hinder the philosopher from detecting and disclaiming those foreign circumstances which he had falsely introduced into his character, and thus rendering the satyrists doubly ridiculous in his turn? No: but it nevertheless had an ill influence on the minds of the people. And so has the reasoning of *Spinoza* made many Atheists; he has founded it indeed on suppositions utterly false, but allow him these, and his conclusions are unavoidably true. And if we must reject the use of ridicule, because by the imposition of false circumstances, things may be made to seem ridiculous, which are not so in themselves; why we ought not in the same manner to reject the use of reason, because by proceeding on false principles, conclusions will appear true which are impossible in nature, let the vehement and obstinate declaimers against ridicule determine.

Conscious how dim the dawn of truth appears 270
 To thousands; conscious what a scanty pause
 From labours and from care, the wider lot
 Of humble life affords for studious thought
 To scan the maze of nature; therefore stamp'd
 The glaring scenes with characters of scorn, 275
 As broad, as obvious to the passing clown,
 As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

Such are the various aspects of the mind——
 Some heav'nly genius, whose unclouded thoughts
 Attain that secret harmony which blends 280
 Th' æthereal spirit with its mold of clay;
 O! teach me to reveal the grateful charm
 That searchless nature o'er the sense of man
 Diffuses, to behold, in lifeless things,
 The inexpressive semblance of himself, 285
 Of thought and passion. Mark the fable woods
 That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow;
 With what religious awe the solemn scene
 Commands your steps! as if the reverend form
 Of Minos or of Numa should forsake 290
 Th' Elysian seats, and down th' imbow'ring glade
 Move to your pausing eye! behold th' expanse
 Of yon gay landscape, where the silver clouds
 Flit o'er th' heav'ns before the sprightly breeze:

*The inexpressive semblance, &c.] This similitude is the
 foundation of almost all the ornaments of poetic diction.*

Now

Now their grey cincture skirts the doubtful sun; 295
 Now streams of splendor, thro' their opening veil
 Effulgent, sweep from off the gilded lawn
 Th' aerial shadows; on the curling brook,
 And on the shady margin's quiv'ring leaves
 With quickest lustre glancing: while you view 300
 The prospect, say, within your chearful breast
 Plays not the lively sense of winning mirth
 With clouds and sunshine chequer'd, while the round
 Of social converse, to th' inspiring tongue
 Of some gay nymph amid her subject-train, 305
 Moves all obsequious? Whence is this effect,
 This kindred pow'r of such discordant things?
 Or flows their semblance from that mystic tone
 To which the new-born mind's harmonious pow'rs
 At first were strung? Or rather from the links 310
 Which artful custom twines around her frame?

For when the diff'rent images of things
 By chance combin'd, have struck th' attentive soul
 With deeper impulse, or connected long,
 Have drawn her frequent eye; howe'er distinct 315
 Th' external scenes, yet oft th' ideas gain
 From that conjunction an eternal tie,
 And sympathy unbroken. Let the mind
 Recal one partner of the various league,
 Immediate, lo! the firm confed'rates rise, 320
 And each his former station strait resumes:

One

One movement governs the consenting throng,
 And all at once with rosy pleasure shine,
 Or all are sadden'd with the glooms of care.
 'Twas thus, if ancient fame the truth unfold, 329
 Two faithful needles, from th' informing touch
 Of the same parent-stone, together drew
 Its mystic virtue, and at first conspir'd
 With fatal impulse quiv'ring to the pole;
 Then, tho' disjoin'd by kingdoms, tho' the main 330
 Rowl'd its broad surge betwixt, and diff'rent stars
 Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preserv'd
 The former friendship, and remember'd still
 Th' alliance of their birth: whate'er the line
 Which one possess'd, nor pause, nor quiet knew 335
 The sure associate, ere with trembling speed
 He found its path, and fix'd unerring there.
 Such is the secret union, when we feel
 A song, a flow'r, a name at once restore
 Those long-connected scenes where first they mov'd
 Th' attention; backward thro' her mazy walks
 Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,
 To temples, courts or fields; with all the band
 Of painted forms, of passions and designs
 Attendant: whence, if pleasing in itself, 345

Two faithful needles, &c.] See the elegant poem recited
 by Cardinal Bembo in the character of *Lucretius*; *Strada Pro-*
lus. vi. Academ. 2. c. 5.

"The

The prospect from that sweet accession gains
Redoubled influence o'er the list'ning mind.

By these mysterious ties the busy pow'r
Of mem'ry her ideal train preserves
Entire; or when they would elude her watch, 350
Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste
Of dark oblivion; thus collecting all
The various forms of being to present,
Before the curious aim of mimic art,
Their largest choice: like spring's unfolded blooms
Exhaling sweetness, that the skilful bee
May taste at will, from their selected spoils
To work her dulcet food. For not th' expanse
Of living lakes in summer's noontide calm,
Reflects the bord'ring shade and sun-bright heav'ns
With fairer semblance; not the sculptur'd gold
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,
Than he whose birth the sister-pow'rs of art
Propitious view'd, and from his genial star
Shed influence to the seeds of fancy kind; 365
Than his attemper'd bosom must preserve
The seal of nature. There alone unchang'd,
Her form remains. The balmy walks of May
There breathe perennial sweets: the trembling chord

*By these mysterious ties, &c.] The act of remembering
seems almost wholly to depend on the association of ideas.*

Re-

"The

Resounds for ever in th' abstracted ear, 378
 Melodious; and the virgin's radiant eye,
 Superior to disease, to grief, and time,
 Shines with unbating lustre. Thus at length
 Indow'd with all that nature can bestow,
 The child of fancy oft in silence bends 379
 O'er these mix'd treasures of his pregnant breast,
 With conscious pride. From them he oft resolves
 To frame he knows not what excelling things;
 And win he knows not what sublime reward
 Of praise and wonder. By degrees the mind 380
 Feels her young nerves dilate: the plastic pow'rs
 Labour for action: blind emotions heave
 His bosom; and with loveliest frenzy caught,
 From earth to heav'n he rolls his daring eye,
 From heav'n to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes
 Like spectres trooping to the wizard's call,
 Fleet swift before him. From the womb of earth,
 From ocean's bed they come: th' eternal heav'n's
 Disclose their splendors, and the dark abyss
 Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze 390
 He marks the rising phantoms. Now compares
 Their diff'rent forms; now blends them, now
 divides;

Inlarges and extenuates by turns;
 Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,
 And infinitely varies. Hither now, 395
 Now thither fluctuates his inconstant aim,

With

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BOOK. III. OF IMAGINATION. 39

370 With endless choice perplex'd. At length his plan
 Begins to open. Lucid order dawns;
 And as from Chaos old the jarring seeds
 Of nature at the voice divine repair'd 400
 Each to its place, till rosy earth unveil'd
 375 Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun
 Sprung up the blue serene; by swift degrees
 Thus disentangled, his entire design
 Emerges. Colours mingle, features join, 405
 And lines converge: the fainter parts retire;
 The fairer eminent in light advance;
 And every image on its neighbour smiles.
 A while he stands, and with a father's joy
 Contemplates. Then with Promethéan art, 410
 Into its proper vehicle he breathes
 The fair conception; which imbodied thus,
 And permanent, becomes to eyes or ears
 An object ascertain'd: while thus inform'd,
 The various organs of his mimic skill, 415
 The consonance of sounds, the featur'd rock,
 The shadowy picture and impassion'd verse,
 Beyond their proper pow'rs attract the soul
 By that expressive semblance, while in sight

Into its proper vehicle, &c.] This relates to the different sorts of corporeal mediums, by which the ideas of the artist are rendered palpable to the senses; as by sounds, in music; by lines and shadows, in painting; by diction, in poetry, &c.

M

Of

Of nature's great original we scan 420
 The lively child of art; while line by line,
 And feature after feature we refer
 To that sublime exemplar whence it stole
 Those animating charms. Thus beauty's palm
 Betwixt 'em wav'ring hangs: applauding love 425
 Doubts where to chuse; and mortal man aspires
 To tempt creative praise. As when a cloud
 Of gath'ring hail with limpid crusts of ice
 Inclos'd and obvious to the beaming sun,
 Collects his large effulgence; strait the heav'ns 430
 With equal flames present on either hand
 The radiant visage: Persia stands at gaze,
 Appall'd; and on the brink of Ganges waits
 The snowy-vested seer, in Mithra's name,
 To which the fragrance of the south shall burn, 435
 To which his warbled orisons ascend.

Such various bliss the well-tun'd heart enjoys,
 Favour'd of heav'n! While plung'd in sordid cares
 Th' unfeeling vulgar mocks the boon divine:
 And harsh austerity, from whose rebuke 440
 Young love and smiling wonder shrink away,
 Abash'd and chill of heart, with sager frowns
 Condemns the fair enchantment. On my strain,
 Perhaps ev'n now some cold, fastidious judge
 Casts a disdainful eye; and calls my toil, 445
 And calls the love and beauty which I sing,

The

420 The dream of folly. Thou grave censor! say,
 Is beauty then a dream because the glooms
 Of dullness hang too heavy on thy sense
 To let her shine upon thee? So the man 450
 Whose eye ne'er open'd on the light of heav'n,
 Might smile with scorn while raptur'd vision tells
 Of the gay, colour'd radiance flushing bright
 O'er all creation. From the wise be far
 Such gross unhallow'd pride; nor needs my song
 Descend so low; but rather now unfold,
 430 If human thought could reach, or words unfold,
 By what mysterious fabric of the mind,
 The deep-felt joys and harmony of sound
 Result from airy motion; and from shape 460
 The lovely phantoms of sublime and fair.
 By what fine ties hath GOD connected things
 When present in the mind; which in themselves
 Have no connection? Sure the rising sun,
 465 O'er the cærulean convex of the sea,
 With equal brightness and with equal warmth
 Might rowl his fiery orb; nor yet the soul
 Thus feel her frame expanded, and her pow'rs
 440 Exulting in the splendor she beholds;
 Like a young conqu'ror moving thro' the pomp 470
 Of some triumphal day. When join'd at eve,
 Soft-murm'ring streams and gales of gentlest breath
 445 Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain
 Attemper, could not man's discerning ear

Thro' all its tones the symphony pursue; 475
 Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy
 Steal thro' his veins and fan th' awaken'd heart,
 Mild as the breeze, yet rapt'rous as the song?

But were not nature still indow'd at large
 With all which life requires, tho' unadorn'd 480
 With such enchantment? Wherefore then her form
 So exquisitely fair? her breath perfum'd
 With such ætherial sweetness? Whence her voice
 Inform'd at will to raise or to depress
 Th' impassion'd soul? and whence the robes of light
 Which thus invest her with more lovely pomp
 Than fancy can describe? Whence but from thee,
 O source divine of ever-flowing love,
 And thy unmeasur'd goodness? Not content
 With every food of life to nourish man, 490
 By kind illusions of the wond'ring sense
 Thou mak'st all nature beauty to his eye,
 Or music to his ear: well-pleas'd he scans
 The goodly prospect; and with inward smiles
 Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain; 495
 Beholds the azure canopy of heav'n,
 And living lamps that over-arch his head
 With more than regal splendor; bends his ears
 To the full choir of water, air, and earth;
 Nor heeds the pleasing error of his thought, 500
 Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,

Nor

479 Nor questions more the music's mingling sounds
Than space, or motion, or eternal time :
heart, So sweet he feels their influence to attract
ng? The fixed soul; to brighten the dull glooms 505
e Of care, and make the destin'd road of life
d 480 Delightful to his feet. So fables tell,
r form Th' advent'rous heroe, bound on hard exploits;
voice Beholds with glad surprize, by secret spells
Of light And some kind sage, the patron of his toils, 510
omp A visionary paradise disclos'd
n thee, Amid the dubious wild : with streams, and shades;
And airy songs, th' enchanted landskip smiles,
Cheers his long labours and renews his frame.

What then is taste, but these internal pow'rs 515
Active, and strong, and feelingly alive
ent To each fine impulse ? a discerning sense
490 Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
From things deform'd, or disarrang'd, or gross
In species ? This, nor gems, nor stores of gold, 520
iles Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow ;
a; 495 But God alone, when first his active hand
Imprints the secret byas of the soul.
He, mighty parent ! wise and just in all,
ears Free as the vital breeze or light of heav'n, 525
Reveals the charms of nature. Ask the swain
, 500 Who journeys homeward from a summer day's
n, Long labour, why, forgetful of his toils
Nor

And

And due repose, he loiters to behold
 The sunshine gleaming as thro' amber clouds,
 O'er all the western sky ; full soon, I ween,
 His rude expression and untutor'd airs,
 Beyond the pow'r of language, will unfold
 The form of beauty smiling at his heart,
 How lovely ! how commanding ! but tho' heav'n
 In every breast hath sown these early seeds
 Of love and admiration, yet in vain,
 Without fair culture's kind parental aid,
 Without invivifying suns, and genial show'rs,
 And shelter from the blast, in vain we hope 540
 The tender plant should rear its blooming head
 Or yield the harvest promis'd in its spring.
 Nor yet will every soil with equal stores
 Repay the tiller's labour ; or attend
 His will, obsequious, whether to produce 545
 The olive, or the laurel. Diff'rent minds
 Incline to different objects : one pursues,
 The vast alone, the wonderful, the wild ;
 Another sighs for harmony, and grace,
 And gentlest beauty. Hence when lightning fires
 The arch of heav'n, and thunders rock the ground ;
 When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
 And ocean, groaning from the lowest bed,
 Heaves his tempestuous billows to the sky ;

————— *one pursues*
 The vast alone, &c.] See the note to v. 18. of this book.

Amid

Book III. of IMAGINATION.

95

Amid the mighty uproar, while below
 The nations tremble, Shakespear looks abroad 555
 From some high cliff, superior, and enjoys
 The elemental War. But Waller longs,
 All on the margin of some flow'ry stream
 To spread his careless limbs amid the cool 560
 Of plantane shades, and to the list'ning deer,
 The tale of slighted vows and love's disdain
 Resound soft-warbling all the live-long day:
 Consenting Zephyr sighs; the weeping rill
 Joins in his plaint, melodious; mute the groves;
 And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.
 Such and so various are the tastes of men.

Oh! blest of heav'n, whom not the languid songs
 Of luxury, the Siren! not the bribes
 Of sordid wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils 570
 Of pageant honour can seduce to leave
 Those ever-blooming sweets, which from the store
 Of nature fair imagination culls
 To charm th' inliven'd soul! What tho' not all

Waller longs, &c.]

*O! how I long my careless limbs to lay
 Under the plantane shade; and all the day
 With am'rous airs my fancy entertain, &c.*

WALLER, Battle of the Summer-Islands. Canto I,
 And again,

*While in the park I sing, the list'ning deer
 Attend my passion, and forget to fear, &c.
 At Pens-hurst.*

Of

Of mortal offspring can attain the heights 575
 Of envied life; tho' only few possess
 Patrician treasures or imperial state;
 Yet nature's care, to all her children just,
 With richer treasures and an ampler state
 Indows at large whatever happy man 585
 Will deign to use them. His the city's pomp,
 The rural honours his. Whate'er adorns
 The princely dome, the column and the arch,
 The breathing marbles and the sculptur'd gold,
 Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim, 585
 His tuneful breast injoys. For him the spring
 Distills her dews, and from the silken gem
 Its lucid leaves unfolds: for him, the hand
 Of autumn tinges every fertile branch.
 With blooming gold and blushes like the morn. 590
 Each passing hour sheds tribute from her wings;
 And still new beauties meet his lonely walk;
 And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze

Flies

—————[*Not a breeze, &c.*] That this account may not appear rather poetically extravagant than just in philosophy, it may be proper to produce the sentiment of one of the greatest, wisest, and best of men on this article; one so little to be suspected of partiality in the case, that he reckons it among those favours for which he was especially thankful to the gods, that they had not suffered him to make any great proficiency in the arts of eloquence and poetry, lest by that means he should have been diverted from pursuits of more importance to his

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Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
 The setting sun's effulgence, not a strain 595
 From all the tenants of the warbling shade
 Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake
 Fresh pleasure, unprov'd. Nor thence partakes
 Fresh pleasure only: for th' attentive mind,
 By this harmonious action on her pow'rs, 600
 Becomes herself harmonious: wont so long
 In outward things to meditate the charm
 Of sacred order, soon she seeks at home
 To find a kindred order, to exert
 Within herself this elegance of love, 605
 This fair-inspir'd delight: her temper'd pow'rs
 Refine at length, and every passion wears
 A chaster, milder, more attractive mien.
 But if to ampler prospects, if to gaze
 On nature's form, where negligent of all 610
 These lesser graces, she assumes the port
 Of that eternal majesty that weigh'd
 The world's foundations, if to these the mind

his high station. Speaking of the beauty of universal nature, he observes that *there is a pleasing and graceful aspect in every object we perceive*, when once we consider its connection with that general order. He instances in many things which at first sight would be thought rather deformities, and then adds, *that a man who enjoys a sensibility of temper, with a just comprehension of the universal order*——will discern many amiable things, not credible to every mind, but to those alone who have entered into an honourable familiarity with nature and her works. M. Antonin. iii. 2.

BOOK III. of IMAGINATION.

98

Exalt her daring eye; then mightier far
 Will be the change, and nobler. Would the forms
 Of servile custom cramp her generous pow'rs?
 Would sordid policies, the barb'rous growth
 Of ignorance and rapine, bow her down
 To tame pursuits, to indolence and fear?
 Lo! she appeals to nature, to the winds 620
 And rowling waves, the sun's unwearied course,
 The elements and seasons: all declare
 For what th' eternal maker has ordain'd
 The pow'rs of man: we feel within ourselves
 His energy divine: he tells the heart, 625
 He meant; he made us to behold and love
 What he beholds and loves, the general orb
 Of life and being; to be great like him,
 Beneficent and active. Thus the men
 Whom nature's works can charm, with God
 himself 630
 Hold converse; grow familiar, day by day,
 With his conceptions; act upon his plan;
 And form to his, the relish of their souls.

F I N I S.

